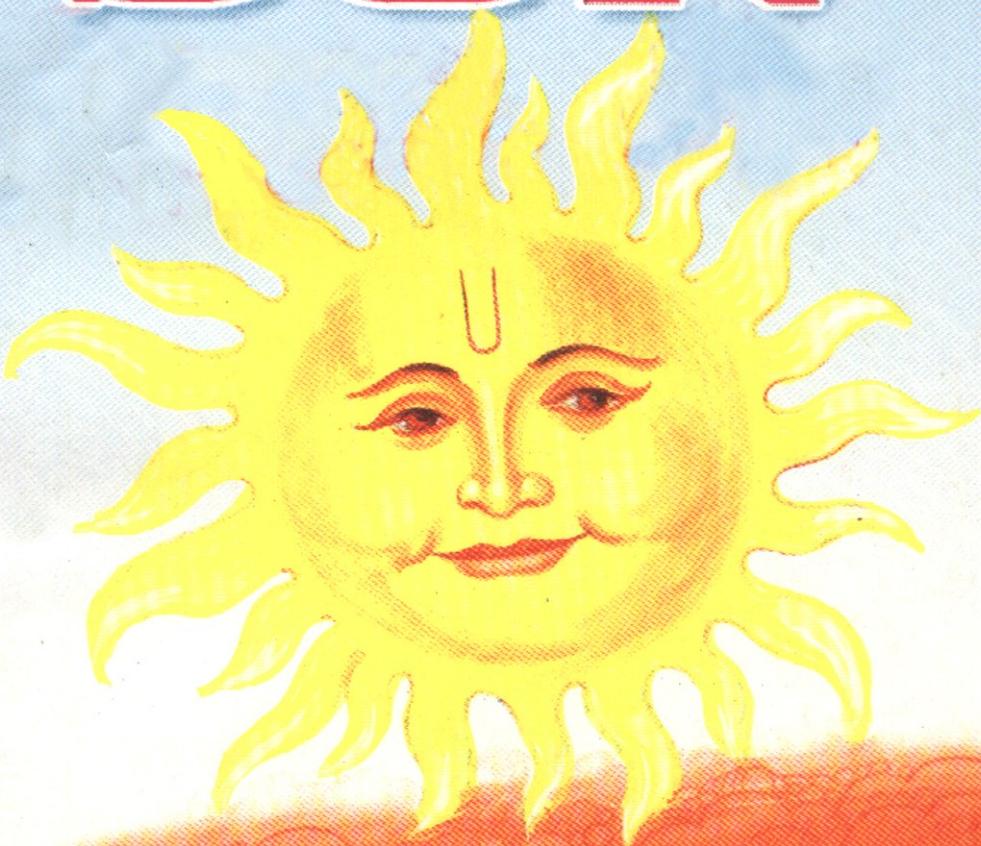


The Story Behind The Development Of
Total Stress Management [TSM]

SMILING SUN



BY

Dr. Shriniwas J. Kashalikar

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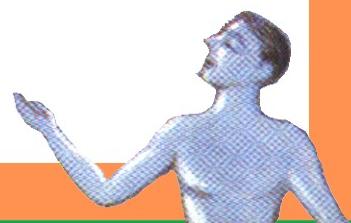
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SMILING SUN

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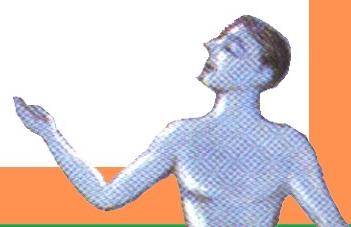
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**SHRI GANESHAYA NAMAH
I SALUTE LORD GANESHA
RIGHT IN THE BEGINNING AS IS CUSTOMARY
AND
PRAY THAT
HE ENABLES ME
TO
COMPLETE THIS WORK SUCCESSFULLY
AND
I PRAY
THE OMNISCIENT LORD AND ALL THE DEITIES
THAT
THEY BLESS THIS BOOK
SO THAT
THIS BOOK PROVES USEFUL
TO
EVERYONE
I SALUTE AND DEDICATE THIS BOOK
WITH UTMOST HUMILITY
TO
MY LATE FATHER AND MY LATE MOTHER
WHOSE
UNTIRING TOIL, LOVE AND CARE
CAN NOT BE RECIPROCATED BY ANY MEANS
AND TO ALL THOSE
WHO HAVE WORKED, WHO HAVE BEEN
WORKING
AND
WHO WILL BE WORKING
FOR THE WELFARE OF THE MANKIND**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

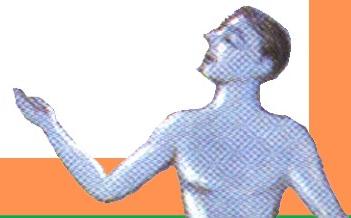
I thank with maximum possible humility and reverence Lord Narayana for having given me this life and the understanding of SWADHARMA and for having enabled me to express it, in words and action, the part of which is this book.

I gratefully thank my parents and all those involved in my upbringing, as their efforts have physically, intellectually and emotionally enabled me to do what I could.

Thus I am indebted to my elder brothers, sister and relatives, teachers, senior colleagues and all the past scholars who have been the source of inspiration, knowledge and wisdom.

I thank my wife Dr. Vibha and my daughters Urjita and Mukta for being with me through out the periods of stresses and strains, in various forms. It was not at all easy. They deserve very special credit for their sacrifice in various ways.

I am indebted to Dr. and Dr. Mrs. Devdhar, Dr. Mashalkar, Dr. Narasingpura, Dr. Pandya, Dr. Khare, Dr. Mrs. Vasudevan, Dr. Nagpal, Dr. Karapurkar, Dr. Deval, Dr. Vyomesh Parikh, Dr. J. B. Agarwal, Dr. Wadia, Dr. Gajendra Singh, Dr. Shrinivas Desai, Dr. Supe, Prof. Mrs. Mehta, Dr. Mrs. Joglekar, Dr. Bawadekar, Dr. Albert, Dr. Hershaft, Dr. Hempling, Dr. Kamalakar Kulkarni, Dr. Kandalkar, Dr. and Dr. Mrs. Beke, Dr. Mahashur, Dr. Hingorani, Dr. Gadkari, Dr. Beke, Dr. Samsi, Dr. Saudagar, Dr. Bhosale, Dr. Murthy, Dr. Shenoy, Dr. Shikarkhane, Dr. Harish Godia, Dr. Lalit Nikam, Dr. Kedar Khandke, Dr. Nilesh Atre, Dr. Anjum Patel their colleagues and nursing staff and many others whose names I do not remember at this moment, for providing support which included far more than excellent medical care.



I appreciate the love, encouragement and help in many ways of my friends, ex ministers S.N. Desai, Prabhakar Kunte, late Dr. Shashank Shinde, late Dr. Sudhakar Deshpande and his family, Dr. Nagral and his family and Dr. Angadi. I also acknowledge my gratitude towards my friends Dr. Solpure, Shashikant Desai, Poyekar, late writer and dramatist Anil Barve, Prerana Barve, late Dr. Dhakan and late senior diabetologist Dr. Ajgaonkar.

I would like to express gratefulness towards my patients and my students as they made all that I could do worthwhile and fulfilling. I thank them for directly and indirectly adding to my knowledge and experience and thereby helping me in my growth.

All this proved vital and pivotal in what could be possible for me to do in the best interest of the society.

I thank the publisher, the artist, the printer and all those involved in the production of this book for their commitment and dedication.

I am sure I have missed many names. But I am also sure that those whose names have been missed won't feel hurt as they have helped me selflessly without even expecting any kind of credit, publicity or money. But when I remember their names I shall surely make it a point to mention them in subsequent editions as well as other books.

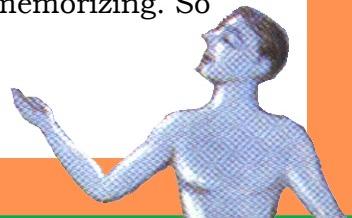
Shriniwas Janardan Kashalikar



PREFACE

As the benefits of my workshops on total stress management [TSM], were validated scientifically, I was encouraged to convert the course manual of my workshops into a book viz. "Stress, Understanding and Management A Way to Total Well Being". In this book I introduced the scientific concept of stress, the mechanisms underlying stress, effects of stress, the support systems, the dimensions of stress and the management of stress. But subsequently I realized that non-availability of answers to a variety of questions in our mind, conceptual deficiency or chaos, intellectual confusion and value crisis lead to conceptual stress. I also realized that conceptual stress could spoil every aspect of life in many ways. This aspect of stress and its management was not adequately dealt with in "Stress, Understanding and Management A Way to Total Well Being". So I decided to write another book "Conceptual stress-Understanding and management". In this book I described according to my capacity, the solutions to some of the questions, problems, doubts, suspicions etc. After having written the above two books I felt that the readers could appreciate the concepts described in these books better, by sequentially reading the books written by me from 1977 onwards and sharing my experiences and thought processes. Moreover, during this entire endeavor, I experienced the fact that the expression of perspectives, thoughts, opinions, views, feelings, desires, passions and needs in a globally beneficial manner is a very important way of total stress management [TSM]. Both these factors stimulated me to write this book incorporating some of my interesting experiences, which proved crucial in evolving the concepts useful in TSM and seemed to have following characteristics.

- A] Their reading does not involve any memorizing. So there is no burden on memory.



- B] Their reading does not involve serious intellectual work. So there is no stress on thinking.
- C] Their reading does not suggest submission to any doctrine or a person. So one's individuality and dignity is left unaffected and in fact respected.
- D] They do not have "dos", "don'ts" and value judgement. So there is no stifling of emotions.
- E] They have a potential to help the readers in more efficient stress management by clarifying some of the concepts and notions in the flow of the story and by broadening the horizons of the experiences.
- F] They have the capacity to help the readers discover the strength and happiness, within. This is very important in view of the fact that most of us tend to forget from time to time the happiness and strength within us and get trapped in poor self-image and get stressed.

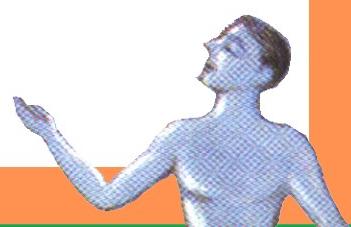
The readers, can assess the benefits of reading this book on the basis of,

- 1] Improvement in cognition [perception], affect [feelings] and conation [responses]
- 2] Continuous improvement in one's ability to handle even new and difficult problems with greater efficiency and buoyancy
- 3] Improvement in quality and quantity of one's contribution to the social welfare

Wishing you all the readers all the best through out your life,

Yours only,

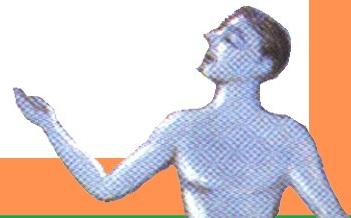
Dr.Shriniwas J. Kashalikar



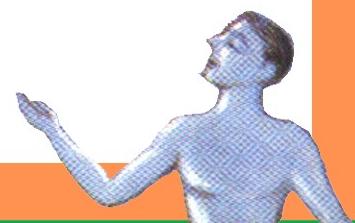
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Unity in diversity

The story behind the development of TSM dates back to thousands of years! The life on earth has faced a variety of problems i.e. stress over millions of years. The human civilization too has faced a number of problems and calamities i.e. stress over millennia. The natural as well as human history is full of struggles against stressful adverse situations. Sometimes the calamities were natural while sometimes they were created by human beings themselves! Sometimes the destructive power of nature overpowered the mankind while sometimes the providence of nature. Sometimes the power of ignorance and darkness shackled the mankind while sometimes the power of enlightenment enthralled the globe. But the struggle continued and continues! The vision, the perspective, the ideologies, the doctrines, the ethics, the norms, the conventions, the rules, the traditions, the customs, the arts, the crafts, the techniques and the scientific achievements involved in the struggle constitute TSM.

It is interesting to note that as Heckel stated, the ontogeny follows phylogeny. This means the evolutionary development is broadly reflected in the development of the fetus. It is even more interesting to note that the calamities, adversities, problems, questions etc, the struggles and the failures and the successes of human civilization in these struggles are reflected in our individual lives. The rising human consciousness of an individual is always in conflict with the basal instincts! So, as individuals we begin with ignorance and gradually learn the TSM i.e. improvement in cognition, affect and conation, i.e. understanding and pursuing one's purpose of life [DHARMA], which is followed by prosperity [ARTHA], fulfillment of desires [KAAMA] and satisfaction [MOKSHA]!

So did I begin this life as an ignorant and dependent child fifty years ago in Savantwadi and kept struggling and



learning TSM!

In Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra State there is a small township named Savantwadi. It has been a princely state. It is said that the original name of Savantwadi was Sundarwadi. Sundar means beautiful and wadi means a place. Hence the name Sundarwadi. Savantwadi is apparently named after the rulers, Khem Savant-Bhosale.

Savantwadi is located on Mumbai Goa road. While going from Mumbai to Goa, in bus, we cross Ratnagiri, Lanja, Rajapur etc. Then we reach Kanakavali. In Kanakavali there is Gopuri Ashram of Late Shri Appasaheb Patvardhan, who is still known as Gandhi of Konkan. After Kanakavali we bypass Kudal and see beautiful trees and big rocks on both sides of the dark and smooth road, the tar on which boils during summer!

Then we reach Salgaon, a typical village in Konkan and then Mangaon, a village famous for its son and one of the most revered, saints viz. Shrimad Vasudevananda Saraswati who is also known as Tembe Swami Maharaj.

After Mangaon we arrive in Akeri where there used to be the celebrations of Ram-Navami. Rama, who is revered far and wide in the world as an ideal king and seventh of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu, was born this day. Navami is the ninth day of the Chaitra, the first month of the lunar Indian calendar.

The people used to gather from neighboring villages for the festival. Many of the villagers working in Mumbai returned from Mumbai to visit their village to attend the festival.

The celebrations included an overnight traditional drama called DASHAVATARA as these dramas depicted the stories of ten incarnations. These dramas used to be performed in open and the audience used to come with their bedding for overnight stay and watch it in sitting and lying down position! I remember that once we had walked



in a group from Savantwadi to Akeri and watched one of such dramas while dozing and shivering in the cold.

Soon after Akeri we arrive on the beautiful roads in the mountain, which are called small “ghats” or “met” of Akeri. During night these ghats look very mysterious and fearsome. During morning also if we are all alone they create terror in mind. But while we are in bus we enjoy their beauty! In these ghats we come across a wall of stones that is probably meant for preventing loss of soil from the hillocks. But this “unending wall” aroused the same sense of wonder that would be created on watching the actual Great Wall of China, in an adult, in our tender minds when we were children, After leaving Akeri we arrive in Kolgaon the “suburb” of Savantwadi and soon reach one of the last relics of the royal fort, its Kolgaon entrance. It is a big entrance the huge doors of which used to be there till recent past. In front of this entrance right at the turn of the road there used be a house where there was a tamed monkey that entertained us.

As we enter Savantwadi, the first thing we are struck by is the lake in the center called Motitalav. Moti means pearl and talav means a lake. Savantwadi is surrounded by the mountain range called Narendra. It is a part of Sahyadri mountain ranges.

Our house is located in a region called Mathewada. Those who know Marathi, sometimes carry the impression that Mathewada is a big house named after some Mr. Mathe. But that is not so. Mathe means royal crematorium. Wada means region. So Mathewada means the region of the town where there is mathe. The word mathe seems to be derived from a Marathi word mayat, which is derived from Arabic word, maiyat, which means dead. In Mathewada, our house is very near the foothills of Narendra Mountain.

By the side of my house, there is a road that leads to a region in the mountains called madar. This word from Arabic means a region at higher level. It also means focus of attention. It also means the support. It is said that long



ago, when I was not even born, the kings used to visit in the royal coach, their palace cum fort on the mountain via this road. There are not even the relics of that palace any more and the road, which used to be a double strip to serve the wheels of the royal coach, has been covered by tar.

Our house is a two storied earthen construction with thick walls. Since the chairs were used sparsely the windows were made at a lower level. There were attics in a couple of rooms on ground floor and the also on the rooms of the upper story. There were simple tiles supplied by brick makers, on the sloped roofs.

I was born in a side room of our house, which was actually called “labor room”! I remember the color of walls in my early childhood was bluish. This was one of the least lighted rooms. Now a days, it is being appreciated that exposing the newborn to a bright light and loud noise as is done in most hospitals and maternity homes is unnatural and hazardous. The fetus in the womb is in a silent and dark environment and hence should not be exposed to sudden bright light and loud noise. Darkness of this room thus was based on the tradition that had a scientific basis. However due dim light I used to feel dreaded to sleep in this room and get bad dreams and nightmares, whenever I slept there.

In my childhood there was no electricity in Savantwadi. There were poles on streets on, which were fixed glass boxes. In these boxes, every day a tin lamp or may be a lantern was lighted. This dim light could reach barely distance few feet. It gave rise to a variety of illusions.

One pole was about 100 meters away from our house and it was behind a big tree of Pippal. Pippal in Sanskrit means holy tree of a fig. That tree always blocked most of the light. Around this tree there is a well-constructed platform. Such a platform is called “paar”. In front of this beautiful tree and facing our house there was and still is a small dome shaped temple of Lord Hanuman. Once upon

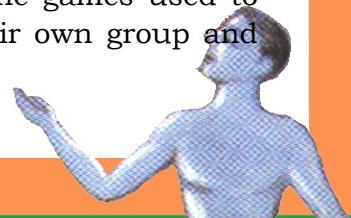


a time constructing a paar i.e. sitting, resting or walking place around Pippal tree was considered a great service to God and society. It was regarded to have very high merit. It was believed to be a real holy deed. Today, it is being appreciated that being in vicinity of Pippal tree is good for health. The Pippal tree is still there. Many people and children gathered around this tree for circumambulating and for chatting. Children however used the paar for playing also.

There was another huge tree of Bakul. Hundreds of children and even their parents used to gather in morning and evening around the Bakul tree to collect the tiny and fragrant fresh white flowers that got dropped. We all belonged to different faiths and religions such as Hindu, Christian and Muslim religions. All of us used to be so much mingled that it was difficult to identify anyone by his or her religion. Those days there were no veils [called burkha or pardah] covering the whole body, head as well as face, leaving only slits to see.

A little farther away from these trees was a Shiva temple. Shiva has many names and in this temple He is worshipped by the name Atmeshvar. It is still there, though it has undergone lot of changes. In our childhood many women from neighborhood used gather in this temple and sing devotional songs i.e. bhajans. I never was quite sure why and how they enjoyed the activity. However I still remember one of the lines, "GHETA NAMA VITHOBACHE JALATEEL PARVAT PAPACHE" which means chanting the name of Vithoba i.e. God burns even the mountains of sin. It is relatively quite recently that I understood usefulness of chanting or remembering the name of God in individual and social life and how in most of the religions it is practiced.

Every morning or evening there used be a big crowd of children in the premises of this temple. The children used to play a variety of games. Many of the games used to be new to us. These children had their own group and



a group leader too. They were taught a variety of games and exercises also. The leader used to teach and monitor the games and exercises. The whole atmosphere used to look interesting. The disciplined yet, joyous atmosphere attracted many children.

Once I went there with my fast friend. This friend used to tell me the interesting background of his family. It was during the Portuguese regime that they had come from Goa to Savantwadi. His great grandfather and some of his family members were converted to Christian religion during the Portuguese rule. But the other family members such as cousins could not be converted. They remained Hindus. The family of my friend stayed behind our house. His grandfather and my father were good friends. Everyday I watched them chat. The conversion could create no wall. My friend and I played almost every day. That day, we did not have friends to play. So we had gone a little away where the children used gather in the premises of Atmeshvar temple.

I asked my friend if he would like both of us to join the group of children. He was not certain if he could be allowed. But he would be very happy to join. I to was a bit hesitant. We used to feel shy even for such small adventures. But the desire to play was strong. So I gathered courage and strength and approached the leader of the group. I asked him if we could join the group and play.

He seemed to be in a bit of dilemma. Then he also made up his mind. He told that I could. But my friend could not. He explained that my friend was a Christian and hence could not join.

I did not understand why a Christian was not allowed. I was not quite convinced by the explanation. But there was no argument. I had to make a decision. Either to join the group, leaving my friend alone, or drop the idea of play and be with my friend.

The bonds of friendship were strong. I refused to join



without my friend.

Later on I always missed playing in that group. But I could not buy the idea of going and playing alone, without my friend. The gnawing sensation however continued, as I could not understand convincingly, why the Christians were not allowed.

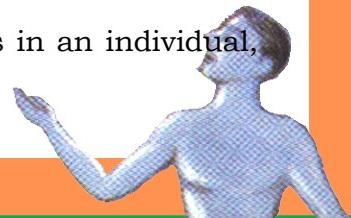
Today the things appear little clearer. Different religions were established as support systems. They were aimed at harmony inside an individual, inside a family and in a society. In short they were aimed at putting everything in order.

However the followers of some religions developed a perceptual error of universalizing the scope of their individual religions.

This led to condescending and inconsiderate, mean, patronizing, dictatorial and coercive attitude. It led to bigotry and bitterness towards the people belonging to the other religions and craving to impose their religion on the others. These people started giving more and more importance to the external features of the religions. This was a sort of regimentalization and coercive in nature. This discrimination on religious basis was followed by indoctrination right from the tender age and systematic development of hatred towards other religions and fanatic pride about one's own religion. It developed anger, fear and insecurity amongst the followers of the other religions.

This led to continuous efforts to organize individuals on religious basis and actions such as defensive as well as counteroffensive reactions amongst the followers of the other religions. They began to resist the conversions and execute re-conversions. This led to fierce fight for supremacy. This led to fighting for sacred places, places of worship, destruction of places of worship, imposition of religions in a coercive manner and religious persecution. This led to religious wars and wide spread bloodshed.

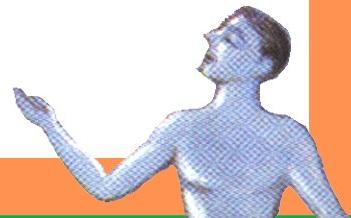
This has led to disharmony and chaos in an individual,



estrangement amongst family members, disruption of family and disruption of society.

In such situation improvement in perception, attitude and actions is the only solution.

Perspective of global unity and intense desire for its actualization in terms of the welfare of the whole world and the actions in that direction would reduce the religious prejudices and hatred. This would entail the shift of the emphasis from external differences onto the core of religions, which is one.

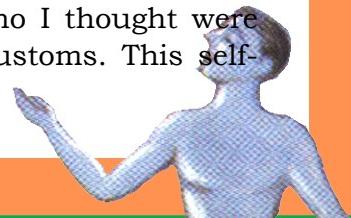


Harmony in diversity

As children we were innocent. But I the innocence had shades of innocent prejudices too! There were many Hindu friends, who belonged to castes other than Brahmin, ridiculed some of us who belonged to Brahmin caste, for being Brahmins! This was to such an extent that I felt guilty for having born as a Brahmin. This guilt was further consolidated by the propaganda made by most of the people that only Brahmins were responsible for all the ills and evils in the Hindu religion.

I felt lowly about the SHIKHANDIKA [tuft of hair saved on the tonsure while remaining head was shaved], the YADNYOPAVITAM [sacred thread] and the vegetarianism. Not only that I did not maintain SHIKHANDIKA and got rid of the YADNYOPAVITAM but soon after I joined college I started getting introduced to non-vegetarian food. It appeared to absolve me from the sin of being born as Brahmin. It seemed to help me merge with the majority instead of getting isolated as a sinful minority.

Later I read proverbs such as “PURANATALEE VANGEE PURANAT”. This means the holy scripture PURANAS were irrelevant and absurd. In addition the history books in the curriculum described the customs such as SATI i.e. the custom of entering the funeral pyre of the dead husband, KESHAVAPANA i.e. shaving of the widow’s head after husband’s death, and childhood marriages. While I read these things also witnessed increase in the devotees visiting the mathe of Sati Bhagirathi and even renovation of even as the other mathe buildings were getting old and collapsed. Since I could never understand from the textbooks, the social, political, religious and other compulsion underlying these traditions, I started developing loathe for Indian culture. I started feeling disgust towards my own ancestors who I thought were responsible for unjust and coercive customs. This self-



hatred got magnified when I was introduced to Marxism. I felt that Hindu religion is a systematic conspiracy to exploit. I felt ashamed of my religion and myself. This was further increased when I read the descriptions and saw in the scenes of the atrocious activities of the deities such as Indra. Later many customs such dowry, animal sacrifices developed hatred about the Indian culture. This hatred increased when I witnessed the lust of the priests in various temples. The British legacy of education left me feeling that Indians do not have national pride, they are not nationalist. They are inferior as human beings. Everything Indian started appearing exploitative and retrogressive.

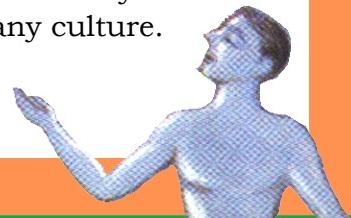
When I look back towards the experiences and feeling in early years of my life I do not feel surprised at all at the craze and adulation for everything foreign. I do not feel surprised at the neglect towards Sanskrit. I do not feel surprised at the reverence towards imitation of the western models of development.

Now I realize how the perception that caste system was a conspiracy of a certain caste and its entire aim was the exploitation of the other castes is defective. The propaganda of this perception has given rise to defective affect or attitude of hatred and revengefulness in some castes and the perverted feeling of morbid guilt amongst certain castes. This has led to defective conation i.e. defective policies and planning and their implementation.

How could this perception have established itself in the society?

I feel the hatred and the prejudice amongst different castes is a result of influence of TAMOGUNA or TAMAS from within India and the advent of RAJOGUNA or RAJAS and TAMOGUNA or TAMAS from outside.

The TAMOGUNA or TAMAS emerging from within rendered the caste system and Hindu traditions extremely coercive and exploitative. This was suicidal for any culture.



Certain indigenous forces represent this even today.

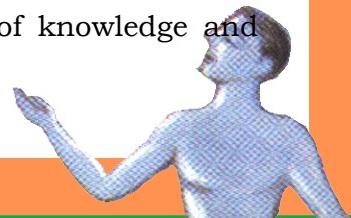
But the development of the faulty perception was aided by the RAJOGUNA and TAMOGUNA coming from outside. This has two aspects one is arbitrary enforcement of equality even through violence and arbitrary insistence on selfishness even at the cost of other by exploitation and cheating. Indian culture suffered from not merely the onslaughts of the violent aggressions of the foreign invaders but it suffered from the psychological onslaught of these thoughts. Thus like some religions the advent of leftist thought, upheld the enforced equality and while the other school of thoughts led to individualism which opposed such enforced equality.

But like the indigenous forces representing TAMOGUNA, both these schools of thought also failed to see the elements of harmony, symbiosis, homeostasis, heredity etc, which were crucial to the development of Indian culture and the caste system. So while the indigenous TAMAS keeps trying to preserve the defects, the foreign influences attempt to condemn and vilify and malign the Indian culture indiscriminately.

It is high time that we appreciate that the caste system and untouchability in the Indian culture and Hindu religion emerged as a result of hundreds of interacting factors. These factors included defective perception and interpretation of the biological observations such as heredity, homeostasis and the concepts such as KARMAPHALA SIDDHANTA. It can also be said these could have been sadistic and masochistic responses to various social, religious, and political conditions.

Besides these factors, foreign invaders slaughtered innocent people and indulged in mass rapes. This created an atmosphere of terror and could certainly be one of the causes of childhood marriages, SATI and KESHAVAPANA.

The invaders destroyed the treasure of knowledge and



indirectly aided the indigenous forces of TAMOGUNA by averting the possibility of process of rectification of the social ills and evils.

This rectification in perception can enable us to have healthy attitude i.e. affect towards one another. This would enable us to take the right action conation on priority basis.

The priority today is to fight against the TAMAS and RAJAS whether local and indigenous or of foreign origin. They are indulging in spreading the hatred amongst communities and castes. They can and do certainly extract political and other advantages out of it but can not and do not take effective measures to end these and other ills and evils in Indian society.

The most important step in this fight is rectification of the education system not only in India but where ever possible.

Any educational course and career that does not have and does not nurture and nourish cognitive, affective, psychomotor and productive elements should be facilitated in possible way to do so. There should be no educational institution and/or activity that lack in any of these elements.

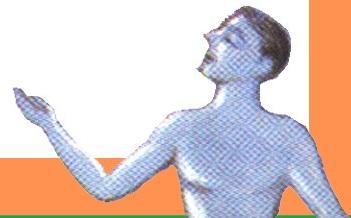
The second step is to see that the educational opportunities reach to every nook and corner of not only India but where ever possible.

These two steps can surely help the poorest of the poor child to learn and the poorest of the poor nation to educate its children. This would literally multiply the per capita income and the gross national production.

This would improve socioeconomic conditions to such an extent that no section of the society would ask for reservations of any kind. Everyone would realize that reservation policy is clearly a temporary and palliative remedy. The politics of vehemently enforcing it indiscriminately as a panacea without treating the



root cause, thereby dividing the society and vitiating the whole atmosphere, [without benefiting the majority of the underprivileged billions] would come to its logical end. Moreover the politics of irresponsibly opposing the reservation policy without looking into its aim of justice for millions, would also come to an end. This would usher in better days for those who are indulging in it, as they would be able to spend their time in more productive and creative activity.



To Sir with love

It was probably when I was four years, that my name was enrolled in a school. This small school was located in a residential premise. There was provision for first four standards.

We used slates, pencils and a couple of books, with very big type. These books used to have a lot of pictures and we children used to get lost even in watching those pictures! Today, it is notable that the quality of the pictures and the papers is improved immensely! There are beautiful and colorful visuals available in movies and on TV and computers too. But it is also true that they do not seem to be able to fantasize as we did! The ruthless competition, rat race, peer pressure to score marks, parental pressure to succeed in interviews and many other factors have accelerated their aging mercilessly and bulldozed their tenderness and their innocence.

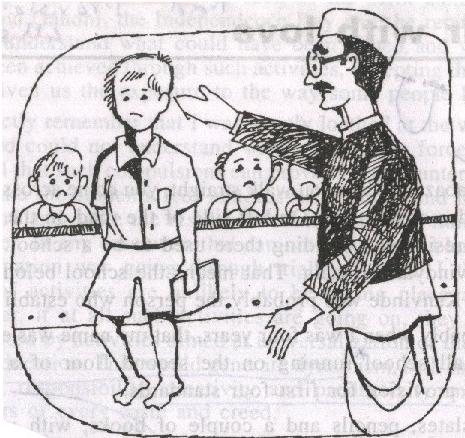
I agreed to go to school with a lot of fear and pressure. Fear was of physical beating by my mother. The pressure was that of her loving care, with which she introduced me to the notion that, good children never miss a school, they always study. My young and tender mind yielded to the fear as well as pressure. I did not want to be beaten and I wanted to be loved and cared for and praised as a good child.

I do not remember if I was escorted to the school, or not. But in most cases the child used to go with a neighbor. So one way or the other, I went to the school. It was first day. My class was on the second floor. I climbed those steps. There was a room cum balcony. There were big windows. They had canopies carved out in wood.

I went in with a lot of uncertainty. I sat at a place where I was asked to sit. Those days we had to sit on floor. This floor was wooden. It was not of clay as it used to be in



other schools. I pulled out a small jute cloth from my bag and spread it on the floor. I adjusted myself and sat on it. We had to sit in a semi-lotus pose called Sukhasana. Incidentally this ensured good flexibility for the knees and good pressure to the feet. It also ensured that there was no prolonged and untoward effect of the gravity that could favor pooling of blood in the legs and hinder the circulation of blood.



I felt very much homesick and lonely in the school. I felt quite uneasy because my brothers and sister used to go in another school.

Our teacher was a middle-aged person with thick glasses. He wore, white shirt, coat and white dhoti. It was apparent that he wore that shirt and dhoti continuously without washing for days together and the coat for years together.

He taught us few things. Then he read a lesson. Many of the things I had learned at home. Afterwards we were asked to read from our book.

I started reading. Somehow I could concentrate intensely. That could be because of the curiosity. It could also be because there was not much of distraction. It could also be because of fear.

But I was reading intensely those big letters. I became oblivious of the class and began enjoying my ability to read. I was feeling proud at my achievement.

Suddenly something very heavy fell on my back. My face almost touched the floor with that jerk. There was intense pain all over my back. I could not know what happened. I



instantly broke into tears.

Then I heard a loud shout. "Do not sleep." My teacher was shouting.

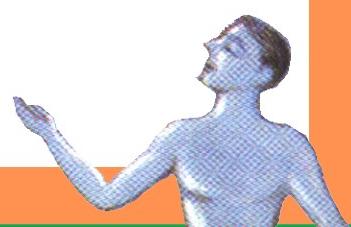
I was shocked. I tried to control myself. But the pain and shame overpowered me. I broke into sobs. It went on intermittently till I went home.

I had gone to avoid beating. I could not avoid it.

I wanted to be praised as a good child. I was condemned as dud who slept in the class. I never returned to that school.

However I know today that the teacher was not my enemy. He simply misunderstood and overreacted. He represented a community of unsatisfied teachers who received neither respect nor good money.

My homage to this teacher who may not be there in this world today would to insist here that the primary education, primary teachers, nursery education, nursery teachers must be cared for with the topmost priority. While the children must be helped to develop their cognitive, affective, psychomotor and productive domains in a warm and exhilarating atmosphere with lots of sports, lots of songs, lots of dances, and lots of dreams, the teachers must be paid well. That alone can make the education interesting and absorbing and not terrorizing. Only such measures can save a child from being beaten and the teachers from committing such a blunder, merely by virtue of misunderstanding or delusion. It would also avoid pressurizing a child to go to school as love of teachers, peers and the study would attract it to the school.

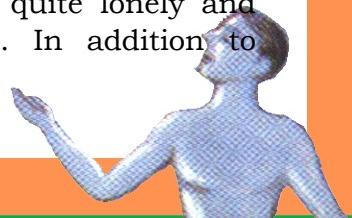


With love to my friend who had to carry the bucket of human excreta

Savantwadi is a conglomeration of hills. Though trees have disappeared from the roads, the slopes have remained. When we walk down the slope called Bavadekar's chadhav [slope], we reach in the square region in front of Mathe. There used to be a very well constructed tomb. This was supposed to be that of a king. I think it is still there though, dilapidated. On the right side there is used to be a shrine of Sati Bhagirathi. Bhagirathi was one of the royal ladies who had entered the funeral pyre and cremated herself with her husband. As a child I used to be afraid of this building which was dilapidated earthen construction. On the side of it there flew a turbulent stream of water. We called it "vahal" because in Sanskrit vahan means flow and jala means water. I used to dread the surroundings, which could fit in any horror movie. It created far more fear once it got dark. One always carried the fear of unknown and also the unsuspected serpents, which could come on the barely apparent road from the murky shrine and the pitch-dark stream of water and its surroundings. The

shrine is renovated and the area is much less dreadful these days. Thanks to the people who frequent the shrine with piety.

Next to this shrine is a steep road that leads to our house. In my childhood I used to be afraid of moving alone on this road even during afternoons as most people in that region rested during afternoon and that made it quite lonely and deserted. In addition to



this loneliness the fear was because there was a belief that there was a ghost near the public tap near the road in the vicinity of the shrines.

That morning I was walking up on this steep cement road. This meant that the ghost would be on left side. I was grown up around this time. But the childhood impressions still lingered in mind! I was little anxious to reach the bottleneck to which this roads to and through which we could reach our house. In those days this region of bottleneck was full of bamboo trees. There used to be an old lady named Baay living there. The memories of this region have become faint and they appear mystical.

So while walking up hurriedly, I saw a young tall man. He was carrying a bucket full of human excreta, feces. When I went a little closer, I recognized him. To my surprise he was one of my schoolmates. Next moment I realized that we were together in first standard and a short but innocent and wonderful association.

I enthusiastically greeted him even as he was reluctant and hesitant.

It was understandable. He was feeling the shame. While he had already become a scavenger and was carrying the human excreta I was a medical student and was on my vacations.

I discovered that he was one of the dropouts and had been absorbed in the municipal job. However, he did not seem to be unhappy or depressed for what happened. He did not seem to miss anything great. But I thought this was more pathetic, though more realistic. He did not know about the other options. He did not know what difference it could make in his life if he were to learn, graduate etc. and get a better job. More importantly he was not bothered about such difference [hypothetical for him] also.

I asked him if he remembered the childhood days.

Now he smiled. It was the same smile. He clearly remembered how he had gifted me a black thread. The

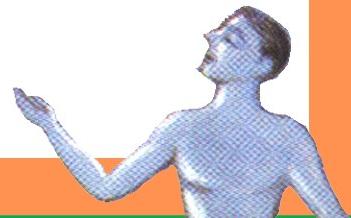


black thread he had tied around my wrist [this is called ganda]. He also reminded me of the locket [called taait] he had gifted me.

Even as he left after chatting for some time I kept thinking about the hue and cry in my family following that incidence. They were afraid that this could harm the family members or me! In as much as the benefits of using the tait and ganda, this fear amongst my family members was also due to the influence of the superstitions.

But our love stood the test of time, even as I had to return the ganda and the tait to him for which both of us had felt very sad.

But though the love and friendship is said to described to transcend everything, superstition, fear, suspicion and socioeconomic and cultural chasms do tend to throttle them and thus create walls between tender and loving hearts. I feel ashamed for the fact that not only in India but many parts of the world hundreds of millions of children are still forced to leave their schools and become labors and undergo atrocious exploitation, just as my friend has undergone. I feel ashamed because this disease of present human society can be rectified by incorporating cognitive, affective, psychomotor and productive domains in the education at all levels.



The aspirations and the reality

This was when I was in my secondary school. One day my friend saw my notebook. He saw the attempts to draw different famous personalities. A wrestler, a scientist, a lawyer, a warrior, a doctor, an actor, a saint and so on were crowded on the last page of my notebook.

He asked what all that meant.

I told him that I aspired to be all in one! How could one aspire to become all in one? There was a reason for such an aspiration. I could not imagine myself in any one profession. All of them attracted me. All of them appeared meritorious. All of them appeared glamorous. All of them appeared enchanting. This was probably because of the way we were being educated or probably because I was unable to come to any conclusion from what ever was being taught or it could also be because I had no experience of the world.

For coming to a particular conclusion with respect to one's career, in older days there were no problems. The career was decided by the caste in which a person was born. But by the time we had entered the school the old system of getting into a career according one's caste had become almost completely redundant. However the relics of that system remained in some castes. Thus trader parents left a legacy of trade for their children. This was somewhat true for the craftsmen, horticulturists, and agriculturists also. But for in my father left a legacy of being an educated person. The only concept was that of getting educated and/or trained in something! Naturally that something was not being clear.

Another clue for choosing one's career is motivation and extraordinary inclination in early years. Thus some children have liking for some art such as singing, or some sport, some field such as engineering right from their



childhood. I did not have any specific liking.

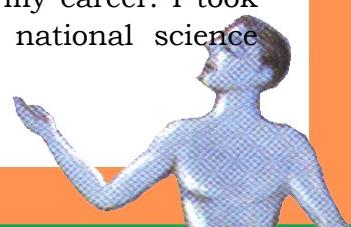
The next consideration was respect in the society. Everyone whom I had drawn in my notebook seemed to be respected in society. So there was still no clue!

In those days, I could not get any clue even after reading the books of history or other textbooks. Because, in the history books there were accounts of kings, queens, warriors, saints and prophets. The books praised the saints, the industrialists and also the revolutionaries. I never could figure out who was right, Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, or Mahatma Gandhi, Shankaracharya or Madhvacharya, those who served in the British army or Bhagat Singh? So I could not prefer any one particular career to the other on the basis of certain righteousness.

In the first year of college the only purpose was to get educated! I still remember how I found it totally absurd and really painful to mug a variety of irrelevant details in botany and zoology. I found the details of metallurgy and organic chemistry equally irrelevant. Even physics was never explained in terms of its application in day to day life. But since the convention that to be educated is good and since education was [and even today is] equated with the Goddess SARASVATI, I did not allow myself to revolt against the atrocious studies.

Lack of conviction and abundance of uncertainty about the value of curricular subjects was compounded by the confusion created by the accounts of different religions, as I could not discern which was preferable to the other. Even totally religions and ideologies were described with great respect or praise, in the textbooks. I never could reconcile the contradictions. Similarly, I was always perplexed as to which ideology would benefit mankind maximally and how.

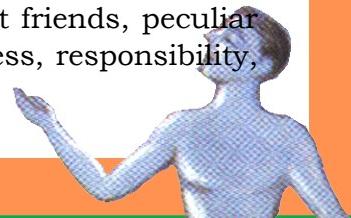
So after I finished my first year in college, there was no clear picture in front of me about my career. I took arbitrary decision to appear for the national science



talent examination. But even in that examination I solved both options viz. mathematics and biology. If I were to get selected I were to go ahead with one of those subjects and do Ph.D. in that with the help of the stipend I could get. But that was not to happen. I then opted for what was called B group as that could lead to medical career, which I thought, was noble. Probably the medical career appealed to my youthful romantic dreams of giving service to the poor and underprivileged ones. It might also be because doctors were respected and that would boost my ego. It also could be because of monetary gains. But that helped develop patience and tenacity to keep on studying especially in view of the fact that many terms were Greek and Latin and there were not even dictionaries which one could refer and understand. But this study without much depth somehow earned me enough marks to get admission to the medical career.

However even as I joined the medical college I questions such as, what was indeterminate? Why the surds were called surds and determinants were called determinants? Why sulfur had so many valences? Why was a student asked questions from the texts? How could that help? Why were not students taken to local governments? What could theoretical jargon achieve? Why was only one theory of evolution taught? Why was the doctrine of vital force suppressed? Why were not the Greek and Latin terms explained? Why was not the comparative biology stressed and made relevant? Why was light not called white darkness? In fact I was full of questions and hence with minimum conviction, clarity and confidence. Later however I revealed that many colleagues of mine never had questions and therefore had conviction, clarity and confidence in what they did [without having answers]!

I came to stay in room number 10 of the B block of the boys' hostel of B.J. Medical College in the city of Pune belonging to the state of Maharashtra. There were six buildings. As I stayed away from the family amongst friends, peculiar mixture of feelings of freedom, loneliness, responsibility,

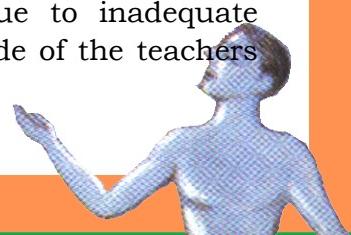


sense of assertion, fear, shyness, excitement, attraction towards the opposite sex, melancholy, lack of purpose etc. gradually began to govern my life. Natural youthful desires of companionship and appreciation made one restless. Narrowness and broadness split the mind. Pursuit for material gains, glitter and glamour made their presence felt, while asceticism also prevailed as it suited the escapist tendency, lethargy and dislike towards responsibility.

Amongst the colleagues the differences and divisions struck me. Vernacular and convent, rural and urban, city students and hostel dwellers, Indians and foreigners, different castes, different financial statuses, there were many divisions. Defying this division was the feeling of friendship. It cut across all differences. But that could not be and can not be a justification for the discrimination and prejudices sprouting from these differences.

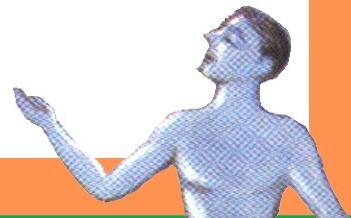
During these days I came across one more disturbing paradox. I saw dejected patients lying on the footpath of the twin buildings of B. J. Medical College and Sassoon Hospital. This was glaring demonstration of the failure of the medical system in India. This disturbed and perturbed my sensitive mind deeply. This created further suspicion about the medical course that I was going through and that damaged my conviction in my education even further. During these days and while going through such experiences I was being torn apart between personal likes and needs on the one hand and my genuine concern towards the miseries of the millions on the other hand.

The study and success, achievements in academics, scoring marks in examinations activated one in one way. But the despise for petty gains, inhibited the action in that direction. This despise could be due lack of aggressive, competitive and killer instinct, i.e. escapism. I do not know. But intellectual curiosity many times stimulated and motivated me to study. But due to inadequate communication, shyness or the attitude of the teachers



the dialogue became deficient. This drained me of my enthusiasm. Lack of caring and warm person to guide in personal life and in academic career left me restless, unsatisfied and even somewhat dejected. However the routine was somehow maintained without gross abnormality!

These all were stressors. They formed the foundation of the future work. These conflicts were to be solved by trial and error and by learning through actual experiments and experiences. There was no readymade solution. The struggle was not to be easy however!



Uncertainty

I used to be restless and uncomfortable with myself.

Uncertainty about goals was a major stressor. This could be compared to the turbulent beginning of a river, which gradually goes on expanding and becoming quieter.

How could I overcome this stressor?

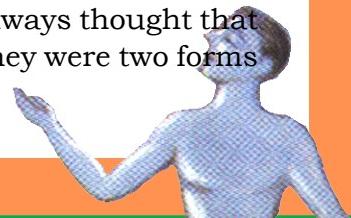
In these days of lack of conviction two gentlemen proved instrumental in shaping my life. One worked in the remote areas of Shahada in Dhule district of Maharashtra. He had forgotten himself while working amongst the Adivasis for their welfare. I had developed tremendous respect for him. His efforts in the direction of transforming the life of Adivasis were really adorable for me. I was not aware of the details of Marxist theories and this work meant nothing else but something really magnanimous and sublimely good. That is all. But it stirred my soul.

There was another individual; who also appealed to me and influenced my thinking. He was a professor of physiology. His dedication in the research of physiology not only fascinated my intellectual curiosity but ignited the flame of passion for research.

Both of these individuals were poles apart if one considered their backgrounds, their fields of work, the modalities of their work, the clothes they wore, the language they spoke and so on. But the common thread that linked them was their unquestionable honesty and dedication to their work. They absolutely matched each other, if one considered their genuine concern for the human welfare.

Because of this commonality I had deep respect and love for both of them.

Even as these two individuals never met and never shared harmonious and affectionate bonds, I always thought that they were two sides of the same coin. They were two forms



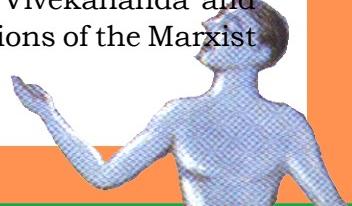
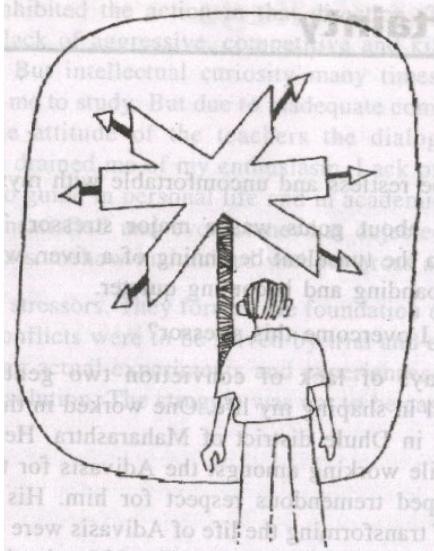
of the same sublime reality. But in spite of this, understanding it still led to the practical dilemma with respect to the field to be chosen. During my M.B.B.S. career I carried on the dilemma by working alternately for both activities.

The Marxist activities included participating in study circles, reading and selling books, wrapping, pasting dispatching and publicizing the magazines, which were being published by the group, which I thought I was a part of.

The academic activities included right from the study of neurochemistry to writing of a theoretical research paper on genesis of sexual dimorphism. In fact my teacher suggested me to write this in response to my absolutely fundamental question about the physiology and evolution of sex.

But this was not all. There were two individuals whose writings influenced me. These two were Swami Vivekananda and Karl Marx. Though rightists as well as the leftist staked claim over Vivekananda, He was generally considered a religious or philosophical leader with that mark of asceticism. Marx was the leader of the atheist elements, who did not believe in asceticism and renunciation but consumed himself in the struggle against injustice and exploitation.

But as far as I was concerned, the selflessness of Vivekananda was actually inseparable part of Karl Marx and many Marxists I knew and social emancipation was inseparable aspect of the teachings of Vivekananda and many of his followers. In fact the aspirations of the Marxist



movement appeared to reflect the social and practical aspects of the teachings of Vivekananda.

Hence I always thought these two represented the two sides of the same coin. In fact the classical Indian philosophy and the essence of Marxist doctrine did not appear to be contra posed at all, to me, though it did appear so, to many.

Not only I saw unity in Marx and Vivekananda, I also felt instinctively that there is no genuine contradiction in life at all and that the apparent contradictions were superficial. I went on without any inhibition and hesitation in various cults. I interacted with a variety of people belonging to different political parties. I went for prayers in the dargahs i.e. shrines of sufi saints. This was also a part of my study, which included areas such as occult powers, miracles and other esoteric things.

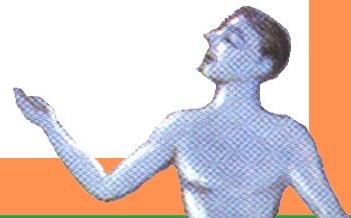
Even atheism and theism did not appear two separate entities to me. They appeared to be only two different points of view, the reality remaining the same. I studied and practiced the principles of other religions including Bahai faith.

But even as I had been going through these exercises and had unifying instincts, I did not have the realization of the unity and was certainly not adequately satisfied intellectually, emotionally, instinctually and even physically. I was far from being satisfied either spiritually or materially.

Since neither the formal medical education nor this haphazard moving around, was providing the fulfillment I sought, I was prone to be coaxed to do anything.

Around this time a friend of mine said if you have higher goals, then why not quit everything and go to Himalaya and do penance there?

"I said, the idea is not bad. But who would guarantee that one would get total fulfillment there?"



He said, "For that we would consult a sufi saint whose guidance would never fail. If he says "yes" we would quit the college and if he says "no" then we would stay back".

I agreed.

He took me to a person sitting by the road in forlorn clothes. To me, he appeared nothing more than a beggar. But I was told that he was a sufi saint. He would give correct direction to our lives. His decision would be infallible.

I noticed my friend's faith in that saint. It was evident from the fact the saint's decision was to be abided by both of us! Naturally, though reluctantly, I agreed to follow the decision of that saint.

My friend told the gentleman by the side of the road, whom he considered a sufi saint [usually called vali in Urdu] our difficulty. He nodded his head without any concern, or at least it appeared that way to me. But I kept mum to honor my friend's feelings.

My friend then asked with devotion and humility for the solution to our difficulty.

The vali replied in a muffled manner "KOLEJ CHODO, SAB CHODO", meaning "leave college, leave everything". I did not hear it properly, but my friend confirmed it later.

Now the ball was in my friend's court! He had to quit the college with me. I immediately expressed my preparedness to quit the college and head for Himalayas and do penance.

But my friend probably realized the grave danger or gigantic blunder in the decision. He coolly went back on his words and withdrew his proposal completely. He now said that the vali had to be ignored.

Today I realize that the students need a guru and not merely a teacher. They need some one really honest and mature to lead them. They need some really selfless and profound person, to guide them. I am happy to some extent that my writings can prove to be of use for such



youngsters as well as elderly. They can be useful especially to those who are sensitive, intelligent and uncertain with respect to their goal in life.

In spite of all this erratic and irregular studies, intermingled with lot of distractions, I passed M.B.B.S. I got the degree. It was no more a matter of glamour for me. Not merely the degree, but even the other pleasures and material pursuits appeared trivial. What was this due to? Pessimism? Selflessness? Depression? Escapism? Aversion for the rat race?

Running after lucrative career and even matrimonial pleasure appeared trivial. Only two feelings dominated. One was the anger towards exploitation and the other was passionate desire to work for eradicating it and creating an exploitation free society.

This dream and pursuit became the tool to manage the stress within. It must have provided some solace to the deepest core of my personality.

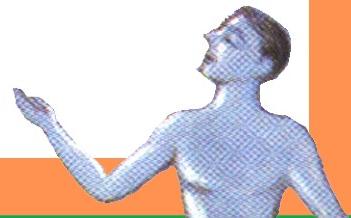
There were many colleagues of mine whose aims were clear. They were meticulous in taking healthy food. They exercised regularly. They cultivated the hobby of playing a musical instrument and also played a game or two. They did all this and also studied hard enough to get good score in examinations. They had conviction, clarity and confidence. With so many volcanoes inside, I lacked all. I could not be like them.

On the contrary I developed selfless affection for those, with whom I saw the dreams of society free of exploitation. These feelings proved stronger. The thought of getting into research was overpowered and the choice was made. Only the goal of exploitation-free society remained.

All my interests such as occult science, miracles, god, religion, science, art got consumed in this goal. I became obsessed with the goal. I became obsessed with the idea of spreading the obsession. I did it amongst family members, relatives and friends. In fact, not merely Marxist thoughts,



but whatever I thought could help an individual and the society, I tried to spread. I thought without realizing in clear terms, that, it would make them happier. This was a crude yet sincere effort towards what I call TOTAL STRESS MANAGEMENT today.

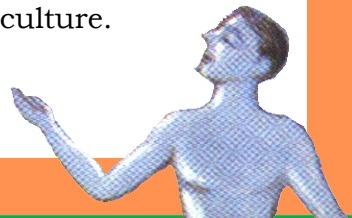


Is it not necessary to go to the root cause?

In January 1974 I came to Miraj, then a small township in the state of Maharashtra. As compared to the city of Pune, Miraj was quite small and relatively undeveloped. The roads were not broad and properly maintained. There were ditches on the roads. Many roads and lanes are earthen and that made the atmosphere quite dusty. There were no footpaths. The drainage system was almost absent and the sewage was not disposed off properly. Heaps of garbage were seen even in the middle of the road. Even the people were quite different. Most of them were villagers, who came from remote and interior villages surrounding the township of Miraj. They came for bazaar or for some other purpose. I was struck by the difference between the two places.

Another characteristic of Miraj was the mixed culture. There were many people who were converted from Hindu religion to Christian or Muslim religion. Many of them however retained their original Hindu surnames and names. I wondered if conversions really could change the core of one's personality. But one thing was certain. The people lived fairly harmoniously even as they had the influence of a variety of customs and traditions of different religions. There was a lot of intermingling.

But the place where I was supposed to work was however, quite different. Everywhere I noticed the influence of American culture. This was because this place was a hospital developed by American mission. I definitely had respect for the missionary zeal. But I still was struck by the cultural chasm between the patients and the staff of the hospital. The illiterate, poor and rural patients' behavior, dealings and talk reflected Indian, rural and rustic culture. In contrast the behavior, dealings and talk, of the hospital staff reflected American culture.



The hospital atmosphere was that of dedication and discipline. Most of the staff members as well as residents were punctual. They all performed their duties meticulously.

I began to work in Wanless hospital. But while working there also, I always was preoccupied with the goal of creating a society free of exploitation. Naturally I felt that their universe was limited. I noticed the lack of that burning concern about the poverty of patients, which was at the root of most of the medical problems too.

This is not to suggest that they were bad at all. But they probably thought that poverty is natural, inseparable and irreparable part of life and had to be accepted. Ironically, not only the staff members but the patients also did not feel anything wrong or unnatural in poverty. They seemed to have come to terms with it.

Amidst this situation one day, I got the opportunity to express my thoughts and my concern about poverty. It is notable that this was because, some of the staff members cared for what I thought and felt, about the patients' problems. I was invited to speak on the social dimensions of gynecological diseases in front of the staff members of the department of gynecology and obstetrics. I almost harped on the invitation. I was happy and excited too. I decided to make the most of this opportunity and started preparing for my speech.

When as I started preparing for the speech the first thought in the forefront of my mind was to bring forth the problem of poverty. I wanted to show how poverty constituted the common denominator of many diseases in general and gynecological diseases in particular. I wanted to indicate how this fact made the most important dimension of most diseases in including the gynecological obstetric ones. Further I wanted to prove how poverty leads to ignorance and how ignorance further impoverishes the people. Lastly I wanted to make a statement that one has to find the causes of poverty and eradicate it if one really cared.



for social health.

But having seen the general atmosphere I had some doubts regarding the acceptance of my views, by the audience. I had in fact anticipated some discussion, some questions and even some arguments. So I decided to prepare thoroughly and also take along with me the references.

The speech started on time. I was quite confident. Conviction usually makes you confident. I began the speech by elaborating on the dimensions of the problem by giving the statistics. I started explaining the causes of diseases, which lied in the ignorance, superstitions and poverty. Then I made a statement that exploitation and the system that nurtured it had to be changed to if wished heal the society. I started reading the paragraph from Rajani Palm Dutt's 'India Today'. This however was not palatable to the boss. He declared that I should not bring politics in my speech.

I did not agree. I said 'As doctors, we must realize that medicine is both science and art. In science we must go to root causes'.

He however thought I was talking leftist politics and hence refused to concede my point.

I was also not mature enough to understand his point of view and negotiate.

I said, 'If the audience refuse to adhere to scientific thinking then I also do not want to continue.' I left the hall and went to my room.

Later on I realized that patience is very important in getting across your point. I was never bitter and inimical to any one of those present there and hence should have exercised some patience and humility.

But in spite of all this one of the senior staff members appreciated my talk and I was satisfied to some extent.



False Charges

Since I was almost obsessed by the thought eradicating the exploitation, discussions on the same subject used to go on and on even through out the nights. I did not realize that this could create nuisance to others. Because of the obsession sometimes the duties in the hospital were also not properly attended. This was because the duties were clerical and I did not feel they were vital to the patients' welfare. But then, these duties which involved filling of various forms for the patients' investigations, discharge etc., had to be performed by someone. This led to increase in the workload on the colleagues. In addition, my forceful way of arguing though unknowingly probably did reflect boastfulness, which could lead to resentment. Adding to all this I could interact comfortably with those seniors, who were not easily approachable for the majority of juniors, who could feel that I was not one of them. Because of all these things and maybe, some more, I gradually started getting isolated.

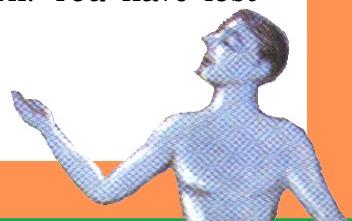
Around this time once I went to meet my brother Anna who was doing his post-graduation in Pune and returned after a couple of days. I had no reason to suspect any adversity at all. But the atmosphere did appear little strange.

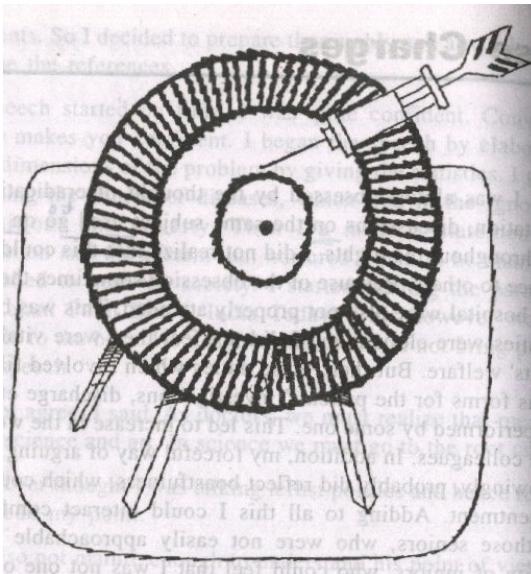
I tried to convince that it could be my own imagination and even suspicion about the colleague

But when I went to my friend's room and came to know that there had been a complaint about me I was proved right. She informed that the superintendent had summoned me.

I questioned as to what was the complaint about.

She told, 'Some people have given the authorities the impression that you have gone berserk. You have lost your balance. You have gone mad.'





I was stunned. In fact I started feeling giddy. I began to feel if I really had been cut off from the reality and become weird.

But how come they thought that I am out of sense

Without answering my question, she added further, ' Besides they also came to know that

you were not around and not traceable too'

But what happened next. I became impatient to know the possible worse news.

But to some extent contrary to expectation she told me that she had met them and explained that I was not insane and in fact been one of the rational and Marxist individuals.

However, that was not adequate solace. I needed to know the response of the authorities.

She continued, explaining that the authorities had received complaints that I kept on talking, in fact gabbling to myself through out night.

I was indeed shocked. I could never imagine that someone stoop to this level merely because he or she did not like me. In fact this was shattering. This was unsettling.

She sensed the disturbance. ' Are you disturbed ? Are you hurt? Please take it easy. They are fools.' Her words exuded affection.

I had to come out of the shock. I had to regain my cool. 'Can you please prepare a cup of coffee for me' I urged.



She immediately and readily made a cup of coffee in that small room of interns house man and registrar's hostel.

Now recovering and analyzing about what must have happened, I asked her " What happened next"

Being comfortable because of my recovery, she went ahead. ' Since you were not traceable they sent a telegram to your house at Savantwadi.'

This once again upset me. "Why? What was the content?" Not realizing that she would not know about the contents I simply bombarded her with the question.

She nodded her head indicating that she did not know.

I was once again in the suspense as to what must have been there, in that telegram and how badly it could affect my old parents at my home in Savantwadi. I felt ashamed and guilty as well as angry about everything and especially the 'human' tendency involved in the whole episode.

'I will teach them a lesson'; I said without actually meaning the same and rushed to my room.

Next day I met the superintendent. He too had suspicious look about my disturbed sanity. I conveyed my displeasure and my hurt feelings for their act of sending the telegram to my hometown and unnecessarily disturbing my parents. Just when I was pleading my case, his peon came inside with a visiting card.

Looking at the visiting card and then showing me, he asked, "Your brother?"

I said, "Yes".

"Send him in", he told the peon.

As the peon went out he started, " What about your efficiency and regularity? I have received some complaints from your neighbors as well."

I explained to him that I was not irregular or inefficient. With reference to the complaints from the neighbors



clarified that I used to talk to my friends about the social welfare and the ways to realize it. Since most of the listeners heard only my voice they thought I gabbled with myself. I also explained that loud music, dance or other noises were not objected but mere talk was objected and in fact branded as insanity.

Just then my brothers came in. The moment they saw me there was a sudden expression of happiness and surprise in their eyes.

I was perplexed to see them surprised.

My brothers kept the telegram on his table. I got up and read it. I was once again shocked! It read, "Your son is missing!" Now I realized why my brothers were surprised to see me there!

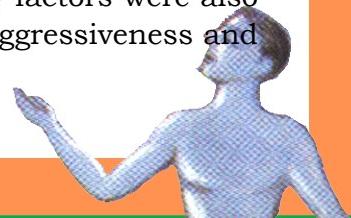
Looking at my brothers he said, "I am sorry you had to come all the way".

Then, noting that I was disturbed, he asked, "Why did not you inform before leaving?"

I explained that I had informed other colleagues. But it was not conveyed to the authorities. Moreover I was not small kid. There was no reason to frighten my parents and family members.

The superintendent and the authorities did realize they were misguided. They also realized that there was confusion. Most importantly they came to know that I was not weird as they were made to believe.

This episode of being branded insane disturbed me quite a lot but by virtue of conviction I came out of it. I realized that this was because of the chasm between the way the establishment and its supporters looked at the life and the way I looked at it. It was also true that this was the price I had to pay for my mission. But it was not entirely true. Complexes arising out of background, age, education, preferences such many factors were also responsible. Besides, my impatience, aggressiveness and



Unreasonable

In those days I used to work in medicine unit which used to quite crowded. Since I never believed in shirking my duty, I used to go every day at half past seven in the morning as per the requirement.

The head of the unit commanded respect. His knowledge was up to date. But somehow his eccentric stress on discipline did not impress me. Discipline had definite place in life. But it could not be the goal in itself. The concern for the welfare of society and the steps taken in that direction appeared more important to me. I felt that in absence such concern, arbitrary imposition of discipline degenerated, those who imposed it. It harassed those on whom it was imposed.

Even today the main emphasis in my programs of stress management is on broadening of mind. Such broadening of mind has scientific basis as well. Broadening of mind is like participating in democratic process. It is similar to the body cells participating in homeostasis i.e. maintenance of the internal environment, which is essential for the health of an individual.

I respected the gentleman for his knowledge. But did not feel respect for his discipline. I felt it was a bit childish, in fact a bit callous and mechanical. But most of the resident doctors revered him.

That night I was working in the ward till five o'clock in the morning. I realized that I might not be able to turn up at half past seven in the morning. I informed the sister in charge of the ward that I would get late the next day.

The nurse said, "We always have this much crowd. This much load of work is always here. So, if you come late, because you got delayed, then the boss would get upset. He does not like it".



I explained to her, “ See, like others, I am also a human being with limited physical and mental capacity. Moreover I am the junior-most doctor. There are many resident doctors senior to me. Further, they are pursuing the career of medicine. They are the ones who should come at half past seven and take some responsibility. It is not me who is supposed to carry the responsibility of the whole unit and that also day and night.”

The nurse said she was not concerned about what was right and what was wrong, but knew that the sir would surely get angry.

“O.K. I shall see what to do.” I left the ward. I did not want to create unnecessary controversy. As it was five o’clock, I planned to rest for a while and after finishing morning ablutions reach the ward in time. To save time, I did not even change the clothes. But I fell asleep. When I woke up it was half past ten! I was quite a bit worried. I was to get late by more than three hours!

Some how I got ready very fast and rushed to the ward. Everybody was now watching me with contempt. They were eager to see me being admonished. I felt very lowly.

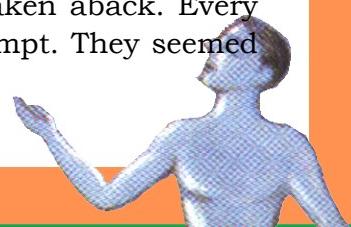
As soon as the boss finished examining the patients, he happened to see me.

“Where were you? What time are you supposed to come?” He bombarded me with the questions.

Suddenly I became fearless. I had fear in my mind till I respected him. The moment he asked that question and displayed inconsiderate attitude, the respect and the fear, both had gone at once! I gave answers to his questions curtly.

“The answer to first question is, I was in my room and the answer to the second question is I am supposed to come at half past seven in morning.”

Listening to that curt reply, he was taken aback. Every body started looking at me with contempt. They seemed



to feel that I was a “sinner” and yet I was “shamelessly arrogant”.

“Don’t you feel ashamed?”

“No Sir. I don’t. I slept at half past five in the morning. I wanted to keep awake and come in time. But I just fell asleep. I was probably too exhausted. Sir it is not a crime to be exhausted while working late night. It is not something I should be ashamed of. In fact my sincerity brought me here. Otherwise it was not easy.”

“But” He wanted to say something.

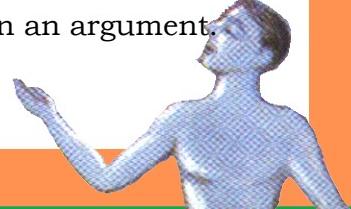
But I interrupted him and said, “ No Sir, this is the limit. I can not work more”

The boss was stunned. He could not argue any further. This was something new for him and something he could not refute. He had to swallow his anger. So only thing he could do was, express his irritation and disgust on his face. He did that and turned to examine other patient.

There was suspense and tension, throughout the ward round.

I kept feeling that the person of his caliber, needed considerate attitude. He should not exhaust himself in trivial and petty matters. A society could be benefited far more, if he spent some of his time and wisdom in improving policies of education, service and research in the field of health.

Today when I look back, this point appears even more important. It is because of the apathy of well-meaning and capable doctors, that the medical field is rapidly deteriorating. In fact this applies to every field. But I also realize that I could have tried to explain my point and plead more decently. This is because people are not what they appear. There is lot of pain inside. They need a healing touch and not harsh admonition. Even senior teachers, doctors, leaders require love, solace and care! It is more important to heal than to win in an argument.

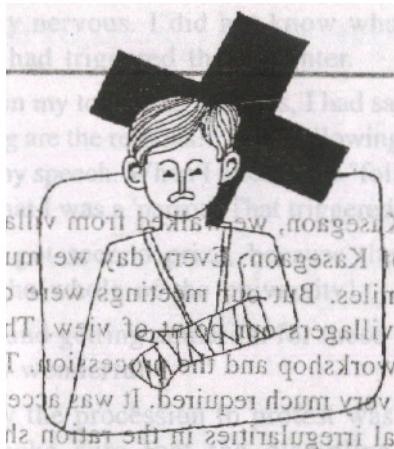


Physical assault

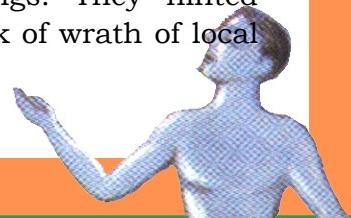
Even as friction and skirmishes took place, there was no depression. There was no lasting enmity.

Most importantly our group was growing. We decided to go ahead with some concrete activity. There was a place called Kasegaon at distance of about 35 miles. My friend belonged to this place. As an initial activity we decided to take the medical help to the people. The medical help usually is good way to establish rapport.

In those days it was customary to do socioeconomic survey and then proceed for the developmental or revolutionary work. We also tried that. But our emphasis was mainly meeting the people and especially the youngsters. After some meetings it was felt that it would be good idea to hold a workshop for the land-less labourers. It could bring the people together and we could interact with them more effectively. We also decided to couple this with struggle. We planned a MORCHA i.e. a procession to register protest against irregularities in the rationing shop. This was sensational news for that small village. It spread like wild fire. Any political activity in small village is usually done under the umbrella of an established political leader or a political party.



It was felt that we, the amateurish youths from other places were unnecessarily interfering in the political life of that village. We were intruding. Some traders voiced their opinions and suggested that we better kept away from such things. They hinted at the risk of wrath of local



politicians.

Some commented that the workshop would be flop as people would dare not attend it.

All this was anticipated. Our youthful decision had the force of conviction behind it. So we did not budge.

We returned to Miraj.

Since the workshop had become the matter of prestige issue, we wanted to make it success. We needed to go to every house and convince them about the need of such a workshop. This required time. We needed at least one week's Preparation for the workshop to be successful. I was trying to workout some arrangement for the leave from job.

On that we went out for a walk and discussed the matter. We sat in a relatively remote quiet farm in outskirts of the township of Miraj.

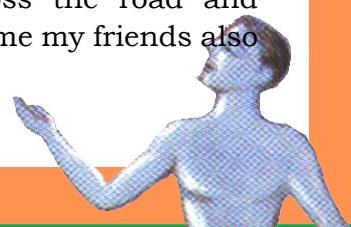
Now it was getting dark and we were about to return to the quarters.

Just at that time somebody seemed to be moving in the bushes. I got up to see what it was. Suddenly a robust individual was seen to whirl a big stone at me. Reflexly, I shielded my face with my hands and the stone hit my wrist. I quickly ran to catch hold of that individual. But while I just managed to catch that person, I was distracted for a moment as my friend said, "He is psychotic, forget it".

Instantly that individual escaped from my grip and once again threw another stone at me from a distance of hardly ten feet.

This time I could not protect. My nose was hit. Fortunately what hit my nose was a clod.

While he ran away, I tried to follow him. But he was quicker. He rushed in to farm across the road and disappeared in the darkness. By this time my friends also

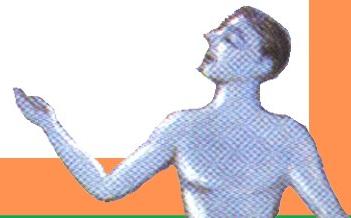


reached there.

My nose was bruised. But my wrist was paining more. On X ray examination it showed crack fracture of scaphoid bone of my wrist.

It required being plastered as fracture of scaphoid tends to cause a-vascular necrosis, i.e. death of the bone. My hand was plastered.

This incidence helped me overcome fear of bodily attack. Further I became happy because I could now get leave from work and do preparation for the workshop. Next day I came to Kasegaon.



Injustice

After coming to Kasegaon, we walked from village to village in the surroundings of Kasegaon. Every day we must have walked fifteen to twenty miles. But our meetings were quite successful in convincing the villagers our point of view. They realized the importance of the workshop and the procession. They agreed that the procession was very much required. It was accepted that protest against the financial irregularities in the ration shop was a must.

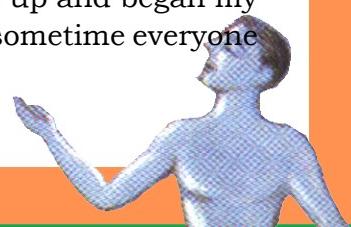
After a week's preparation the workshop began on time. Many people had come from Mumbai, Pune, Sangli, Miraj etc. The speakers had excellent interaction with the farmers and the land-less labourers. We had chosen many topics of immediate relevance to the people. Whenever there was a gap, I gave extempore speech. The overall supervision was also not easy. At times some people, some of whom appeared psychotic were found trying disturbing the whole program. They had to be physically taken out of the place. But everything was managed.

The workshop went on excellently for three days. It was indeed a stupendous success.

My speeches were praised beyond my expectation. I was very happy to know that I could establish dialogue with people. Because, I used to be shy even to talk to colleagues. It is true that I had a couple of awards during school, but that meant nothing. The following incidence would show the worth of prizes.

It was during my second year of college. I took part in intercollegiate elocution competition. I prepared for the speech from many books and went to the place of competition.

When my name was announced I stood up and began my talk exactly as I had by- hearted it. For sometime everyone



looked impressed and seriously involved in what I was talking.

But suddenly every body started laughing. Even those who were expected to boost my morale could not resist laughing.

I became terribly nervous. I did not know what to do! Suddenly I realized what had triggered that laughter.

While speaking on my topic viz. fashions, I had said, "For fashions to develop following are the reasons!" The "following" was written there in the papers of my speech. When I uttered the "following", it revealed to the audience that I was a parrot. That triggered the laughter beyond!

However I still got second prize, because there were only two competitors in the whole of the university!

On this background getting adulation for speeches and their spontaneity was wonderful.

On the third day the procession to protest was organized. It was important to make sure that the discipline and peace were maintained. Most of us were vigilant. I was told by the senior citizens that they had not seen so many people participating in a procession, in their lifetime. People sang the songs with progressive content, popular during those days.

All of them gathered in front of the ration shop, which was the end point. The only thing was extra 25 paise were charged on the ration card. But the issue affected everybody. So clerk had no option but to admit and to apologize.

Looking at that mammoth crowd the clerk was afraid. He urged me to pacify the people. I told him, "It is very simple. Do not stretch the patience of people. Go and apologize for what has been done and assure them that you are not going to repeat it. Do not make them wait and test their patience. Do not test the poison".

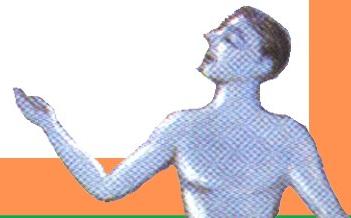
The clerk came out of the shop and admitted that extra



twenty-five paise were charged for treating the local leaders and bureaucrats with wet parties!

People were happy and felt victorious, when listened to his explanation, apology and his promise! The procession was converted into a public meeting and after the meeting everybody went home happily.

Even as it appeared to be a major success, now I realize that it was merely a small positive event. The society and we all had to and have to really put in Herculean efforts so that a major success become actually evident.



Oppression and suppression

My internship training in Miraj was over.

The rural internship was completed in a smaller place called Vita, situated in Khanapur Taluka of Sangli district. This period of six months was like a bad patch. The activity in Kasegaon had not yielded any significant positive results. In fact it had led to the development of some wounds which took decades to heal. The family members and friends were fairly estranged due to my leftist thinking and some of the leftist friends had gone away for many reasons. Some resented my practice of prayers. Some disliked some things in my personal life.

The mission I so much wanted to plunge in was not coming forward in the form of concrete idea. The roads to the conformist life were by choice closed by me. The personal life was devoid of any concrete plans.

Most importantly I had begun to understand the human nature. It had started becoming clear that it was not at all easy to fight economic exploitation. It had deeper roots in the intellectual, emotional, instinctual and physical aspects of human life. In fact exploitation was a small visible part of a giant octopus with thousands of tentacles. The giant octopus appeared to curse some to be exploited and condemn some to exploit. Or in other words, the exploited as well as the exploiters appeared to complement each other under the spell of this giant octopus. The available



intellectual framework was inaccurate and impotent. It was unable to provide the strength and means to conquer the giant octopus and free the society of exploitation.

I began to realize that it was relatively easy to prepare people for struggle. But whom should they target? Targeting a particular class no more appeared quite accurate. The most important thing required was comprehension of the life in its entirety. One had to base the comprehensive perspective, plans and strategies, on such understanding.

I began to realize that I was deficient in this. Neither I, nor anybody else had answer to the question; "what after Kasegaon activity?"

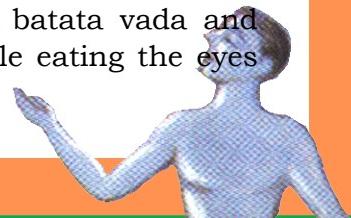
The work at Kasegaon came to halt at least temporarily. We were honest in our efforts. But our background, means, our experience and our grasp of life were inadequate, to lead the society in every sphere of life.

Those who accompanied and relied on us in Kasegaon might have felt betrayed. If so, I do not blame them. But I can say one thing. We never gave them false promises. We never cheated them for a single paisa. Most of us have been working directly or indirectly for the same goals. Moreover they must appreciate that though none of the leaders could provide us satisfactory leadership.

Around this time I also did propaganda of a leftist magazine. But later I started realizing the inaccuracy and futility of its content. In fact some opinions expressed in it, raised serious doubts. But in spite of this, the core of Marxism viz. welfare of all, me emotionally close to them. Three years later I made several subscribers for the magazine run by the same people.

The meaning of the word Vita is similar to being fed up. The time in Vita was being wasted in eating and watching movies and nothing else.

Everyday I ate breakfast constituting batata vada and misal. It used to be so spicy that while eating the eyes



and the nose always kept running. So I included in the breakfast, the sweet dishes such as jalebi and rabdi. We watched movies like "Sugandhi Katta" and "Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye".

The life in Vita crawled ahead like a diseased and handicapped individual.

Even the setup of the health center where we four interns were posted, was poor. We hardly got any experience or training.

There were two medical officers in the rural health center. They treated us very well.

But the whole society was getting infested increasingly with virulent organisms like, meekness, meanness, lethargy, ignorance, hypocrisy corruption, and so on?

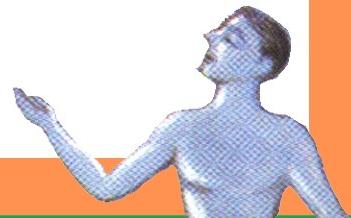
In those days I stayed along with my friends in a small rental double room apartment. There was a housemaid who used to do washing and some minor household work. She was hardly in her thirties and become a widow.

That day everybody else had left and I was about to leave, as soon as she finished her work. Noticing that there was nobody else, she called me inside the inner room. I went inside. She had raised blouse and exposed her entire back. She requested me to examine her.

I quickly realized what could prompt her to do that. I could have been wrong. But from her expression it did appear that she was inviting. If it was so, it was very natural and understandable if had unsatisfied sexual desire prompting her to make that request.

I could have been excited in some other instance. But in this case I felt sad at her helplessness.

Without overreacting in any way, I maintained my calm. I quietly told her that she could come to the hospital and would be treated very well there. She went after some time.



After she went, I began to think. Even as I advised to come to the hospital, i.e. rural health center, it would not solve her real problem. I had no solution for it.

I kept wondering as to what sort of values were prevalent in socialistic countries? What are norms with respect to sexual behavior? Are the norms similar to the capitalist countries? What was commonly called termed communist was “socialist” and democratic was “capitalist”. What should be the policy in a happy and healthy society?

It was different to think of these things theoretically. The stark reality of her widowhood was disturbing. He had become helpless not for food, shelter, clothes, education. She was helpless for another basic need. What was bothering me was in this could not be the case in USA as well as USSR.

In what was to fight the situation? In what way some one like me, could help her? I could not figure out anything.

People required indefatigable strength and enthusiasm to change the circumstances. Exploitation of every kind was rampant. The life in villages and the urban slums was miserable. People had been helpless.

What is human excellence? Technological advances for few do not signify progress. The glitter and glamour in some sections of the society is not a sign of healthy society. The social situation where every one gets the opportunity to live and evolve as human being indicates human excellence.

It was not in view.

Toady, in 2001, the poverty and ignorance is not eradicated. The miseries of the people in villages have not ended. Unemployment is increasing. New recruitment is slowed and in many places stopped. The exodus from villages to cities has increased. The slums are proliferating. Many industries are sick and workers are becoming jobless. India is in the fold globalization. In those days there used to be resistance to Coca cola. Today there are aggressive



advertisements of alcoholic beverages. Younger generation is coming in the grip of addictions.

The stress has multiplied. The value crisis has deepened. The individuals are getting frustrated. The families are getting disintegrated. The peace and happiness is rapidly decreasing. The crime rate has increased. The callousness has increased. The rat race has increased. The selfishness has increased. The terrorism and violence in other forms has increased.

The condition of an individual and the society is really grim.

But at this juncture I feel confident that what I have written over the last twenty-three years can be used to fight the giant octopus.

In those days however I was not confident. This was however better. Being confident without proper perspective would have harmed the society. I did not have the proper perspective. I did not have clear vision of what was to be done. I was not in a position to offer leadership.

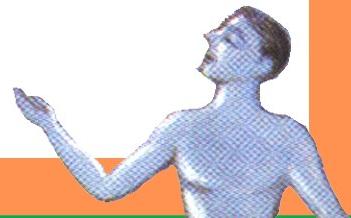
I was never a devotee of Marx. But now I was rapidly moving away from the mechanical approaches. Neither the call for religious unity nor the temptations of party politics attracted me. Neither the hollow dreams of individual prosperity nor the unrealistic dreams socioeconomic equality could possess me. I could not dissociate myself from various questions, evident in the surrounding reality. These were not even addressed by the then established thinkers or leaders. I could not accept any one's leadership.

I knew that my ignorance was more enlightened than the convictions of many. I knew that mechanical approaches based on inadequate understanding of life would not give accurate and effective solutions. I preferred to fight my way on my own.

The six months were over. I got permanent registration from Maharashtra Medical Council. I became a certified



doctor. I could officially handle the problems of life and death. There was no remedy in my repertoire, for the cancer of exploitation. But my commitment to find a remedy was growing. I was ready to do anything and everything to solve every new riddle. I was not in a mood to choose a path of least resistance! I could not be satisfied with short cuts. I could easily accept readymade solutions. Quotations and citations could not convince me. With every new experience I wanted to grow. With every happy and every painful experience I was prepared to dive deep into the ocean of life.



Road to Adeli

Dr. Jayaprakash, my brother immediately elder to me and I were about to finish our post-graduation and graduation respectively. Somewhere around this time an idea of a family hospital was taking shape. This was because my two elder brothers had already been practicing. Dr. Shripad [Bhai] was in Savantwadi and Dr. Waman [Taya] in Vengurla. These are townships are in the district of Sindhudurg. Tatyā thought that we all brothers could work together and develop a family hospital. He was searching for a place. Finally he could get a piece of land in Adeli. Adeli is a small village Vengurla taluka. It is about about five miles from the town Vengurla. One of my brothers is Dr. Madhav. We call him Bapu. He has recently retired as a principal of Devchand College, Arjunnagar. He was the one who got the fencing done. The construction of the first building began. He supervised that during the vacation.

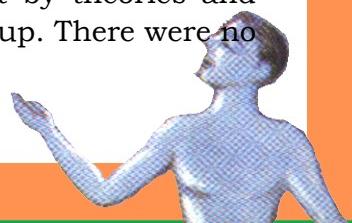
Tatyā wrote a letter suggesting that I join the join the project.

I thought over Tatyā's idea. It appeared good.

That region lacked modern medical facilities. I felt that if I set my example in front of the people it might help in development of the society free of education. If not anything else I could work at least as a socially committed doctor. I thought that this was needed in villages. Moreover such work of being close to people was dear to my heart.

Further I did not have commercial angle. This made the project look good.

More important was the fact that it did not have any color. One could call it from private enterprise to philanthropic project, anything. There was no burden or pressure of party lines. There was no harassment by theories and theses. There was nothing like core group. There were no



secrets.

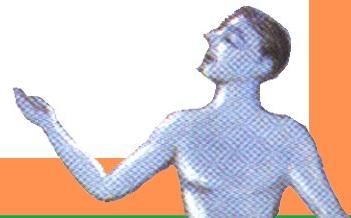
Most importantly I had no other plans. I did not want to enter party politics. I did not want to start any political movement haphazardly. There was no movement where I felt completely at ease. That option was out of question. I was not interested in the routine medical practice. I did not feel financially insecure, to go for it. So I took the decision to go to Adeli. Anna had appeared for his examination of master of surgery. He shared many of my views and feelings. He too made up the same decision.

The villages in Konkan were peculiar. They were backward industrially and economically. Influence of technology, science and philosophy was hardly noticeable. But at least one member of the family stayed in Mumbai. This brought home the influence of glitter and glamour. The respect for money and superficiality took the place of rustic innocence. Superstitions prevailed. But religious values faded.

This atmosphere demanded glamour. Especially the doctor could gain respect if he was glamorous. But a doctor could not become prosperous unless he squeezed the patients. There was usually doubt and suspicion. The tendency to change doctor every day was also seen. But one hardly found curiosity and studiousness. One could hardly find discipline. But one expected from the others!

There was no fierce competition. But there was that tendency to interfere in others' personal life. There were not many opportunities and not much enthusiasm to create any. People continue to get dragged. Or rather they adjust their life to that pace of snail! They adjust their aspirations to that scarcity.

But all this did not matter. Faults or deficiencies need treatment. One could always point out faults. That could help none. This region where we grew as children, seemed to invite us. We came to Adeli.



Patience, patient and fear

Adeli is situated on the road that connects Savantwadi and Vengurla. Its population was 2621. Actually the hospital was located about two miles away from the village proper. This part was called Khutval. When we reached Khutval, fencing was completed and construction of the main building had begun. The well was dug up.

We started staying there defying the lack of bed, bathroom, latrine and bare minimum facilities. It was felt that without our presence, the work could not pick up the speed and momentum.

The hospital was started. But there was nothing other than a building in making! It lacked even doors and windows. The mattresses, furniture, electricity, vehicle all were missing!

But there was fun. We used to answer the call of nature in natural setting of bushes. We took bath on the well in the backyard. The water used to be pretty cold. But lack of geyser did not matter. It was a thrilling life.

In Adeli, the breakfast used to constitute the tea, bhajiya and shev. We used to get it from restaurants in the neighborhood run by two families in their houses.

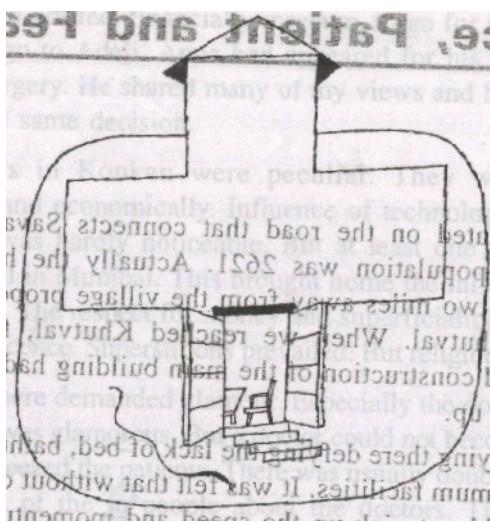
The building in making had four big rooms and a verandah. We started the out patient department in one of the rooms. The historical table, bench and chair used by my father in his dispensary were arranged.

It was first day. Anna and myself sat in the O.P.D.

This was entirely different atmosphere.

There was chirping of sparrows. There was humming of pigeons. The background was that of total silence. Occasionally a scooter or a bus on the road broke the silence. We were struck by the lack of noise pollution.





Pollution had become common even in smaller towns. Here there were no dust, no gas, no smoke and no chemical odors.

We had not invested money on inaugural ceremony. In fact it was not formally inaugurated at all. This was because the construction work was still going

on. Moreover one had to take the experience and then commit. There was no point in committing even before the hospital was constructed. This was not a project where the funds were guaranteed.

However, because of this hardly few people in the surrounding area knew about the hospital. So on that day the only work was that of waiting for the patient.

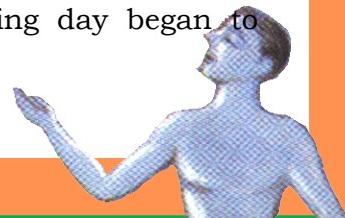
While sitting there I felt angry for those who had petty aims and petty goals. At present I feel sympathy for such people. They are deprived of the training in affective domain. They are not trained to overcome pettiness. They are bound to suffer and make others also suffer. Pettiness is a major cause of stress.

While I was in that angry frame of mind suddenly some one asked, "Is there a doctor"

One lady walked in. She had brought her daughter. This was the first patient of the hospital. We opened our innings with her! This was also the only patient on that day.

We treated her with utmost care and enthusiasm! Rest of the day was spent in cleaning, planning and chatting.

Gradually the protracted and unending day began to disappear.



The darkness entered one by one, every nook and corner.

In hostels we slept on cots.

Here we lay on thin carpets spread on the ground. I always tried to brave the ghosts, black magic etc. For protecting from snakes, scorpions and other creatures, we had kept bamboo sticks by the side.

But the silence was so unusual that I felt extremely uneasy. It was impossible fall asleep.

Gradually the feeble background noises also vanished. There were no electrical poles by the side of the roads with bulbs or tubes. Auditory blankness was coupled by visual darkness. The auditory and visual cues disappeared entirely.

This lack of major sensations made me feel extremely restless. My sensory system was not used to such blankness and darkness. Total silence and total darkness coupled together made the whole experience frightening. We used to believe that fear arose out past experience, threat or delusion. But this experience or the sensation of "sensationlessness" was terrible. It had nothing to do with feelings, thoughts, superstitions etc.

I began to get palpitations.

I lay on that thin carpet which giving one sensation. The sensation of cold ground was adding to the fear. We two and the whole hospital building and the premises appeared to be one part of the blank and silent darkness. They appeared to have lost their identity and existence.

Anna spoke something and I responded too.

Sensory cues are important for physical, emotional and intellectual orientation. This is especially true when an individual is used to it. In their absence one tends to lose orientation of every kind. The existence itself begins to get distorted.



I repeatedly confirmed that the sticks were in place.

The sudden noises produced by wall lizards added to fear. The sudden movements of rats added to the suspense. The barking and howling of dogs added to the unpleasantness.

It appeared as if I was losing the orientation of time also.

Life was becoming dimensionless! The sense of past, present and future was getting dissolved. My whole existence had become topsy-turvy.

For quite some time we tried to keep each other engaged in some kind of conversation. While doing I automatically thought of the people doing penance in jungles. I could guess to some extent the difficulties in their penance. I could feel how difficult it could be to attain that supreme state where the riddle of life is solved. My respect for them multiplied.

After some time Anna fell asleep.

I waited uneasily till I could sleep by the dawn.

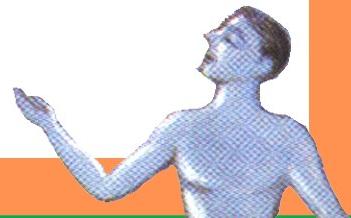
One of the recent event taught me more about fear!

It was when I had been to Dwaraka in Gujarat State of India. In a remote and isolated corner of the city there was an old temple and there was a rivulet flowing near by. It was getting dark. I thought nobody would go in that kind of temple!

But to my surprise and admiration I saw a gentleman aged over eighty dressed in saffron moving around there.

He was not afraid of any medical problem, physical injury and for that matter, any kind of risk! All alone he was self sufficient and confident!

Whenever I used to feel afraid I would remember him and get courage!



Dietary problem

In India there are several customs and traditions. Many of these have scientific basis.

But some traditions and customs involve money. A poor person can not afford them and deprive him of the benefits. Some traditions and customs tend to create fear. They tend to shackle a person and prevent him from struggling for justice. Disasters such as earthquakes and wars make it difficult to follow most customs. This shows the place of customs in the panorama of life. It is essential to develop a sense of proportion about the customs and traditions. This requires careful and serious study and research.

One of the traditions is that people born in a Brahmin caste are supposed to abstain from eating non-vegetarian food.

In the setting of Adeli where there was no source of food, we were compelled to request our gardener Munegkar to provide us food. We wanted to make sure that this did not put too much burden of cooking extra dishes on his wife. Hence we would urge him not make anything special for us.

Moreover we were aware of their limitations with respect culinary skills and training.

He therefore provided us with his choices. One of them was the fish.

He cherished the small spiny variety of fish. He made it a point to bring it for us too.

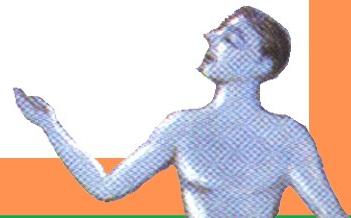
It was a great pleasure. People also appreciated our readiness to adjust. They appreciated our openness. They liked our uncomplaining nature.

But we did not cherish that variety of fish. We did not have the knack of eating spines.



But Mungekar realized it only after explaining to him directly, clearly and repeatedly!

Till that time he felt that he was being very generous to us. He kept providing us with that small variety of spiny fish, which we many times helplessly discarded.



Aai: the support system

I was very happy and comfortable when my mother joined us. We called her as per our tradition by the sublime term Aai. Considering her old age I felt little worried and cautious also. There was a risk from scorpions, snakes and other poisonous reptiles too. Taking bath and answering the call of nature in the open, involved definite risk.

She however had the gut feeling that our work was divine. On many occasions she consoled as well as encouraged us. She gave us hope. She had actually accepted all the inconveniences. But because of her, we started getting good home food.

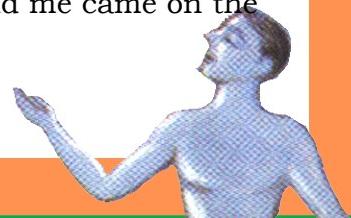
There was no latrine. So she had to get up before sunrise to answer the call of nature. There was tap water. She had to walk about half a furlong to the well to etch water.

But she loved village life. She liked that calm and quiet atmosphere. She felt additionally happy because she could move around freely amidst the trees. We were fortunate to have five acres of land full of greenery.

We procured a cot for her. She used to sleep on it. We still had to be satisfied on the ground. Those days spent in her company were unforgettable. Dreams and love, hopes and warmth filled that period with really divine bliss. The hospital was rapidly coming to age.

One day I had to admit a boy. His fever was not coming down at all. Moreover there were problems at home. I had to accept the challenge. But it was tough challenge for an inexperienced doctor like me. There was no doctor whom I could approach for help or advice! There was not even a drug store! In case of emergency one had to rush to Vengurla, for doctor as well as drug.

The patient slept on the cot and Aai and me came on the floor.



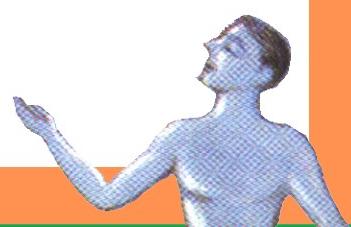
I started my treatment. But he did not respond. He developed abdominal distension. Temperature was not coming down. When this continued for two days I started losing patience. I began to feel that it was probably wrong decision to admit him. I also felt that it was a mad adventure at his cost. This was the first indoor patient. The whole prestige of the hospital was also at stake. I had to work day and night. Indoor patient and outdoor visits had to be attended. In addition, by now, the number of out patients had increased beyond expectation.

I realized the deficiencies in the training of a doctor in urban setting. The techniques were inappropriate. They did not work in rural setting. Training in behavior and communication with patient was quite inadequate. The independent experience of treating a patient was missing. This makes the doctor bookish and theoretical.

Somehow it occurred to me that he could have developed faecolith i.e. hard stools. But his intestines were expected to be delicate. This happens in typhoid. His protracted fever also looked like typhoid. This contraindicated enema or purgative. I had to think. Suddenly I made up mind. I put the gloves and applied Vaseline and put my finger in anus. One by one I removed several stones of stool. After some time passed lot of stool on his own. He passed lot gas also.

After some time the temperature came down to normal. The boy then recovered rapidly and went home on his legs.

Today Aai is not living. But what has become immortal is the stay with her in those days charged with missionary zeal.



Huge responsibility

After the episode of the first indoor patient, I felt scared even by the idea of admitting any one. But how could I avoid my responsibility?

There is one small village in neighborhood of Adeli. Its name is Vajarath. Vanita was brought by her mother from Vajarath.

Vanita also had fever. I gave the treatment. I gave her medicine for roundworms. Roundworms were common in that area.

Two days later Vanita's mother returned. Vanita's fever had gone up. The mother was worried.

I was also afraid. But how could I say that?

Vanita's mother said that she was quite afraid, as she was alone at home.

I was in dilemma. I could not tell her that I was also alone. Anna was not there. The resources were meager. I had to take this responsibility also.

I said, "If you are alone and afraid, don't worry. We will admit her. She could be looked after well". I added to reassure her.

The fact that Vanita needed admission added to her anxiety. She thought that the problem was serious.

Some how she was explained by the nurse.

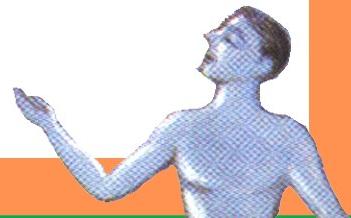
She came back with Vanita.

We still had only one cot.

Once again Vanita was given the cot and Aai and me came on the floor.

I started the treatment.

First day went without any response.



The night brought no relief.

Next day fever increased. The anxiety and tension also increased.

We had repeatedly learned from senior doctors. "A doctor should have lion's heart and eagle's eyes."

I did not know how to change my specie. Moreover, how could I acquire the qualities of two other species?

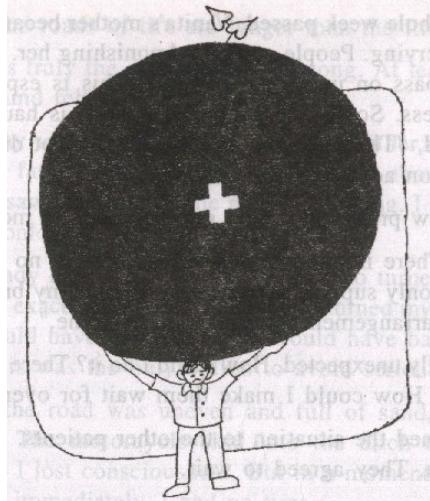
I used to get totally involved in my patients. I used to feel pain, I used to feel feverish, I used to feel sad. I used to feel ecstatic. Everything paralleled with that of the patient and relatives.

Vanita's stubborn fever became a part of my existence. I could not eat properly. I could not sleep properly. I kept getting up and examining her repeatedly. I knew that it was meaningless. But it was a reaction of anxiety. I knew the treatment was correct. I knew that there was nothing else I could do.

But I noticed something else. My robotic repetition had sent wrong signals to Vanita's mother. She thought Vanita was worsening. My anxiety infected her.

Day followed night with hope. Night followed day with despair. The fever continued. My knowledge was turning out to be sterile.

When one whole week passed, Vanita's mother became desperate. She started crying. People started admonishing her. It is usual in villages to pass on unsolicited advice. This is especially when one is helpless. Some one said, "This place is haunted." Some one else said, "The doctor is



novice. He can not diagnose." Yet another person advised, "Take her to Vengurla"

I wrote a new prescription and gave to Vanita's mother.

She said, "There is no body to help me. I have no money even. You are the only support. You are my BHAV, my brother. Please make some arrangement and get this medicine."

This was really unexpected. How could I do it? There were patients in the OPD. How could make them wait for over one hour?

But I explained the situation to the other patients. I asked them their opinion. They agreed to wait.

I started the motorcycle.

I was possessed by the worry about Vanita. I was fighting the difficulties. But they now seemed to go beyond control. I started doubting the very decision of coming to Adeli. Why did I invite this trouble? The motorcycle was speeding on the tar road. My mind was whirling in the whirlwind of anxiety, worry, confusion and doubts.

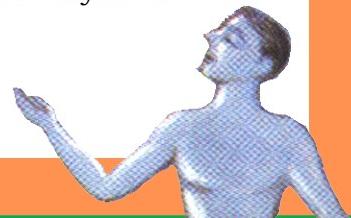
I was almost obsessed by the questions, "What was wrong with Vanita? Why was she not responding?"

It appeared to be day of weekly bazaar. People from neighboring villages were walking to Vengurla. Many of them carried vegetables, local fruits such kokam. Kokam is a round and sweet fruit of the size of a lemon. They were to sell these in the market. That would earn them some money to buy grains. Some carried bundles of fuel wood. They must have been walking that way for years together. The road must have seen generations after generations walking.

Today I was there on that road speeding up with my mission.

No one knew who would be there after some years.

I was reminded of a song.



“O brother, the roads of life are longer than the life itself”
This road was truly the depiction of the song. At least my tense and frozen mind felt so.

My mind saw, Vanita and her mother in tension. I also saw her father who would know nothing about what was happening. I saw the faces of the patients waiting. I also saw the faces of the onlookers and rumor mongers.

Suddenly a lady carrying a bundle of bamboo turned a bit. The bamboo came exactly in my way. Instantly I turned my motorcycle. Or else I would have been hit. That would have badly hurt the lady also. This was the only option to avoid serious accident.

The side of the road was uneven and full of sand, stones and other debris. The motorcycle skid into the ditch there. I was thrown away. I lost consciousness. But in a moment I recovered and stood up immediately. I had no time.

People gathered around me. They seemed worried. Apparently the sight of accident was frightening. There was no fracture. I had bruises. Moreover my trousers had been torn. Hence my condition must have looked serious. All this, led to some commotion.

I hurriedly declared, “I am alright” and rushed to the motorcycle.

The headlights had been broken. The handles had been twisted. Somehow I managed to ride it and reached my brother’s house at Vengurla. Tatya gave me the injection of tetanus toxoid.

After reassuring him I went to the chemist in Vengurla. I bought the medicines for Vanita.

I was oblivious to the reaction of people at my condition. I was totally preoccupied by the thought of reaching the medicines to Vanita.

I reached Adeli. Our nurse came out. I handed over the medicines to her. She was worried about what had



happened to me. I told her that I was all right.

I went to Vanita and examined her. I instructed the nurse about the schedule and came out. Quite a few of patients were waiting. By now they had come to know about what had happened. They seemed appreciative about the humane angle.

I attended to their problems and came for lunch.

That morning, afternoon and night all saw me fighting. But they seemed to bring no good news. Vanita's fever persisted.

Vanita's mother felt guilty that I was injured because of her.

Now it was her turn to console me. She started reassuring me that I would get success. She kept telling that she would listen to none. She would not shift Vanita at all.

But this added to my responsibility. I could have felt relieved if she were to shift Vanita. I was unable to tolerate the physical and mental strain.

At that point of time, I had a hunch. She could be given a dose of medicine, for roundworms. It appeared queer. It was a bit risky too. But I had to try.

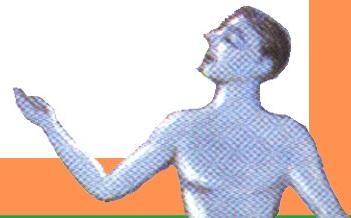
I gave a double dose for roundworms. I made it a point that the nurse was around Vanita.

Aai saw me nervous when I went for lunch. She saw me trying to smile. She was relieved a bit that there was no mortality.

She seemed very brave. She said, "Do not worry. Everything will be fine." Just eat this hot rice and relax.

I was moved by those words. I got some support from that warm gesture.

But who else was to worry, if not me? I was the only responsible person. I was the captain of the ship. I had no escape.

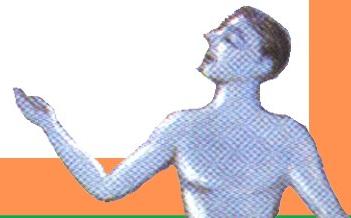


I forced few morsels down the gullet.

Aai had not still eaten. I urged her to eat and take rest.

I had to go to Vanita and relieve the nurse Hema, for food.

Aai had that unusual faith I God. He was peace personified. She in her soft voice that was loaded with affection, told me not to worry about her. When I looked back while going towards the ward, she was serving herself.



Revelation of the healer within

I came and sat near Vanita. Her mother and Hema both went for food. The fever was still not coming down. Now, Vanita was complaining of abdominal pain.

For a moment I thought this was ominous.

Why should she get pain? Could it because of the medicine I gave? Was something wrong with the intestines? Were they ruptured? Was there possibility of peritonitis, a very serious condition?

But at this juncture, I gathered strength. Even as I always remained unsatisfied with my medical knowledge, it was because I believed in perfection. I believed in going to the depth. I liked going to the root causes. It was not that I knew nothing. I was irregular and uncertain. I was restless. I was haphazard and not examination oriented in studies. But it was not that I had not studied during my medical course. I had spent days and nights in casualty, wards, operation theaters and library. I was not dishonest. My aim in coming to Adeli was not petty. This introspection revealed to me the inner strength.

The integration of instincts, emotions and intellect gives unsurpassable strength. But such integration is not easy. Present education system does not train in such integration.

I went out after Vanita's mother came in.

I sat in the OPD. The afternoon was quiet. My mind was stable in my conscience. Time was passing. Rather, all of us were passing through the time!

I suddenly saw Vanita's mother rushing the OPD. "Vanita is purging. Bunches of worms are coming out. The whole body is cold and clammy."

She was afraid.



Momentarily even I was.

I ran inside and examined the pulse and BP. They were normal. I checked the temperature. It had come to normal.

Sometime back I had overcome the strain theoretically. At this juncture I was relieved in every possible way. My face reflected the victory. The whole atmosphere changed.

Every one gave a sigh of relief.

After a couple of days Vanita recovered completely.

At the time of discharge, addressing me as brother, her mother said, "BHAVANO, I do not have money. I shall settle the account after get the money order from Bombay. Please wait till then."

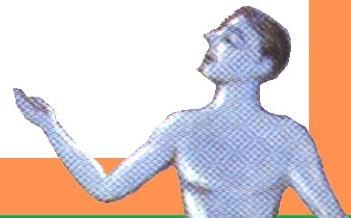
I agreed. But in a moment I changed my mind. I said, "Do not give money. Give some gift as you memento. Even if it is inexpensive it would be alright"

Some days later Vanita's mother gifted a barrel. It could be useful for storing drinking water for the patients.

This barrel seemed to remind me of my commitment in that incessant work. It spoke of my guts in facing that accident. It kept emanating the strength of my conscience.

Someone said, "This is mirror given by Vanita's mother to the "ugly duckling".

My eyes filled with tears.



Wild fire

Now the building of the hospital had begun to take shape.

The masons from Goa and carpenters from Vengurla were engaged for the construction work, which was going on. They used to work in the morning, cook their food for the after noon, and work again in the evening and then sleep in the same premises. This had made them friendly. We used to have free interaction.

One day I was charting with the carpenter.

He suggested that we set fire in the backyard.

I said "Yes" in a casual manner.

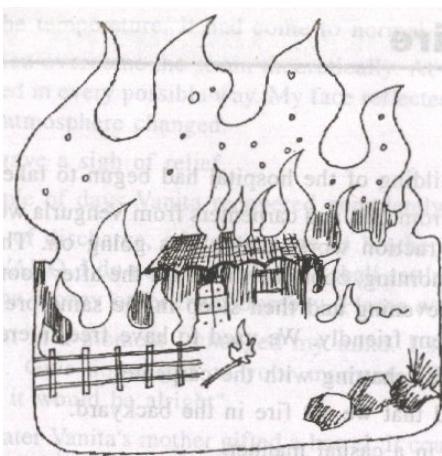
He was a peculiar character. He shouted, "Do not take it casually"

I was apparently not convinced.

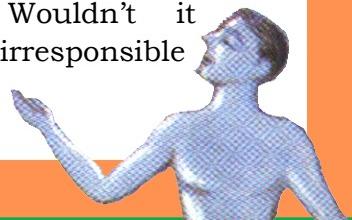
Then he again said, "Ask me if why it is important. Then I will explain"

I laughed at this style and asked, "Why is it important?"

Then he elaborated, "This backyard is full of bushes and



grass. It had not been inhabited by human beings for ages. Naturally there must be rats, scorpions, snakes. You have opened a hospital. People would come here for getting relief. What would happen if there was a snake bite? How would it reflect on you? Wouldn't it mean irresponsible



behavior on your part?

After setting fire the snakes and other animals usually escape and do not return. That is why it is important."

After this much elaboration any body would have been convinced. So was I.

I asked to do it immediately.

But he was a bit reluctant now. He probably sensed the danger of spreading the fire. He said, "You have eat. We can set the fire after some time."

I disagreed now. I said, "I can not when I know that the patients and visitors are in danger. Let us finish it immediately."

The carpenter set out to prepare.

He broke some branches with a lot of green leaves. He made two bunches. He gave me one and kept the other for himself. Then he explained to me how to protect oneself from the fire. He also explained how to douse the fire if it were to go out of control.

Our backyard was an agricultural land. It had been divided into small plots. Their borders were raised by piling of clay. There was a lot of grass. There were bushes also. We had to clear the small plots, one by one.

All the preparation was ready.

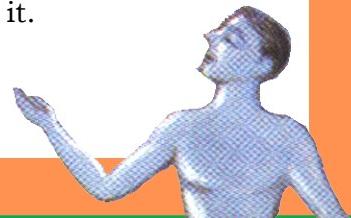
Mestry once again alerted me about various possibilities.

Now he lit the matchstick. Then he skillfully set fire in plot.

Mestry was in full control of the fire. He went on directing the fire from one corner to another.

Suddenly the wind changed its direction.

The flames doubled. They seemed swallow everything in its way. The fire now spread to the fence. It became the wild fire. The tree of jackfruit was caught in it.



One could not believe the sight. The living green tree was instantly charred.

I sensed the gravity. The next moment the fire would have destroyed everything. Most importantly, it would have burnt the neighbor's house.

I was frozen. My senses came to standstill. I could not move.

But the next moment I saw something else.

Mestry almost entered the fire with electrifying speed. He went on thrashing the fire with the bunch of branches he had. As he went on beating, the fire came under control.

I was amazed at dramatic change I was witnessing. The sixty-year-old dark and slim man had demonstrated a miracle.

Now he coolly came asked for some oil.

I caringly asked if he sustained burns.

"It would swallowed everything. There was no option. I had to endanger my life".

Let me apply some oil to arms and legs. They have sustained superficial burns.

I immediately gave him oil.

While Mestry was applying oil Munekar came from the other side of the backyard. In his usual casual style he asked, "It seems you set fire"

Mestry was lost his temper. "Can't you see what happened? You are of no use. Everything would have been burnt. Doctor was afraid."

Then showing his burnt hands and legs he said, "This is how I had to fight the fire all alone"!

Then turning towards me he said, "Please go and have your lunch. Now everything is safe".

I went in mechanically.



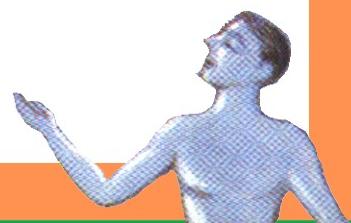
“Do not play with fire”, we were taught.

Today while the fire played with my sensibilities, Mestry fought it.

How thin was the line separating life from death and being from nonbeing!

The patients' relatives however were resting comfortably. They were oblivious of all that had happened.

Whenever I come across any arguments I remember these incidences and that helps me to be more realistic! Otherwise there is always a tendency to boast about one's courage and bravery.



Riding the problem

The buildings were sprawling and the fame was spreading. The whole territory seemed to be reassured by the presence of a good doctor.

Our neighbors catered tea from across the road. In addition, they informed about the public feelings also.

Anna came from Pune. My enthusiasm multiplied.

A lady was brought in taxi.

She was taken in the OPD on stretcher.

We carefully took her history.

Now it became clear why her relatives directly asked for admission. She already had been treated and discharged from two hospitals. At other places she was declared impossible case. They had refused admission. Some well wishers advised them the option of Adeli.

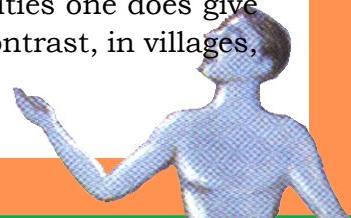
Sarasvati was in her thirties. But she looked over seventy. She suffered from diabetes. Scientifically it is called diabetes mellitus. This is to differentiate it from diabetes insipidus.

We explained to the relatives that this was really a difficult case and one could not give any guarantee of life. It was almost certain that she would not survive.

All of them said in chorus, "Do what you can. We would accept the outcome."

They need somebody to take her responsibility. They must have been fed up. It was impossible to look after her at home. She had multiple abscesses all over her body. She was not able to walk. She had become totally dependent. Even slightest movement caused her pain.

This was also to avoid public flak. In cities one does give much value to public opinion. But in contrast, in villages,



public flak is given importance.

In the olden days public opinion could boycott an individual or a family.

That could mean “sanctions” on everything. The life would be impossible.

This custom had brought restriction individual freedom. But checked the individuals from going too astray. Hence the relatives take care of the patient. If they did not then they had it. The public wrath would make them miserable.

We started her with anti-diabetic treatment. All the necessary adjuvant treatment and the antibiotics were also started.

Our nursing care was excellent. Hema used put her heart and soul in it. Sarasvati's minor wounds were dressed well and started healing.

But there was a big abscess in her thigh.

It needed surgery. We had some equipment but not the Operation Theatre.

We explained the difficulty to the relatives. We suggested, “Shift the patient elsewhere. She is much better. You can get her operated there.”

But now they had developed confidence in us.

They were more than happy with our treatment.

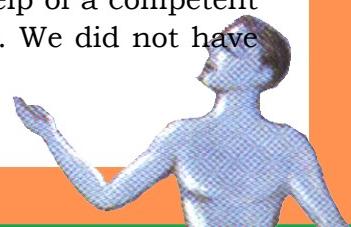
They requested us to go ahead.

We explained the risk again.

But they were insistent.

We prepared our mind. The first surgical operation was to be done on this difficult case.

We were to undertake it without oxygen, without blood, without trained anesthetist, without help of a competent second opinion, without chemist store. We did not have



equipment to gauge the blood sugar also. We had assess the situation from urine sugar.

We arranged two boxes of mangoes. We kept bench on them. We made sure that it was stable! Anna decided to give anesthesia. I was to incise and drain that abscess. The whole planning was done.

Sarasvati was brought to the “Operation Theater”

We concealed our feelings of apprehension.

Anna instructed me appropriately.

The anesthesia was given. I started. The moment the incision was taken the pus started flowing profusely. I held the kidney tray to collect it.

That forcefully flowing pus filled tray after tray.

It might have about two liters of pus.

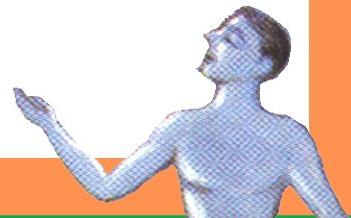
Sarasvati regained consciousness after some time.

Gradually the other boils began healing. She started moving on sides. Then she started getting up. The bigger boils also healed. She started standing. Ultimately the biggest abscess that was drained also healed. She started walking.

This transformation in her was a miracle.

We were extremely happy. Her relatives could not believe in their eyes.

Sarasvati became the symbol of our efficiency and devotion.



Stress of Melancholy

Anna had natural aptitude and skills in technical and technological progress.

I was involved in overall expansion and deepening of the human content in the project. Both seemed to complement each other very well.

I used to write in local newspapers, give public speeches and participate in vaccination programs arranged by youth club of Savantwadi. My aim was to inform the people about our aims and objectives. I wanted to share the perspective of social development and social justice. But the concept of society free of exploitation seemed totally alien to them. It seemed to be unimaginable for them. It could not be even a dream. The people and especially women worked very hard. The beautiful canvas of the green trees, blue sky and red earth seemed cursed. In the farms poor children were seen working. Through the rivulets women had to pave their way. They had carry local produce on the head. They could barely earn their livelihood at the end of the day. Their feelings seemed dried up. Their superstitions seemed to make them caricatures. Their passions seemed to be doused. Their aspirations thwarted. Their uncomplaining toiling seemed robotic.

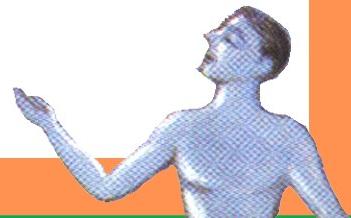
All what dreamed for them looked totally irrelevant.

But I tried to communicate my feelings. I used simple language. I also tried make it as irrelevant as possible. But it did not work to my satisfaction.

Once there was a public meeting in Savantwadi. I was the guest speaker.

I reached in time.

There were ten to fifteen people. Most of them were organizers and pensioners.



oking at the crowd I was disappointed. The people had come as pastime.

I had to talk. I did it. I spoke on the state of medical profession.

The audience was oblivious to what I talked. But I talked to walls. I talked to myself.

But when I finished there was wonderful applaud. I was followed by well-articulated obligation of thanksgiving.

I laughed at myself.

Could thoughts be deposited in some one's brain by drilling machine? Could new vision be imparted by putting eye drops? Could apathy be treated by shaking? Could melancholy be treated by tickling?

The meeting was over.

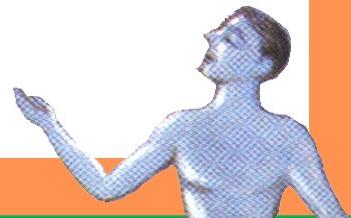
I had to leave for Adeli.

It started getting dark. I had a strange thought.

The road to Adeli was road to light. However it was full of external darkness. It was frightening. Hardly any one was found on the road! We had to sail through the storm on our own. We had chosen it.

We could not expect help from mercenary or gullible.

Both were helpless!



Threat to Life

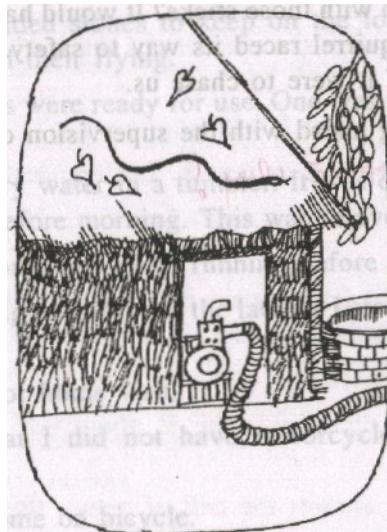
We had about five acres of land.

This was left barren for years. We finished the construction of well. Then we constructed an engine room. This was required for the fitting of suction pump. Irrigation of the plot became feasible we planted coconut, mango and some other varieties of trees. As our plant was in the interior and remote, are everything was doubly expensive. But one could not help.

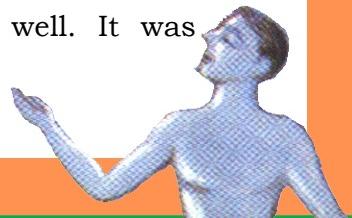
After we used to stroll around and supervise, the horticulture, finishing the hospital work. We used carry bamboo sticks. This was required for protection. One could easily come across a snake. Sometimes one came across a berserk bull too.

One afternoon we had gone out in the backyard for supervision. I think it was a month of May. It was quite hot and there was no breeze. The air was still. The hot sun seemed to have forced every thing to keep mum!

Such afternoons are also frightening. People preferred to stay back in house. They knew that snakes usually came out of their holes and rested in the open.



We discussed issues about trees, their growth, requirement of manure and such things. We reached the well. There still sufficient water. This was encouraging. If it had dried then it could have created havoc. There was a rivulet near our well. It was



just outside our compound. It had dried up completely. It looked as though it was emaciated and sick!

At that time I saw something in the roof of the engine room. I did not quite recognize what it was.

Suddenly there was a noise. Before we realized what was happening we saw a snake literally jumping from the roof of the engine room. Within a fraction of a second it was in the rivulet. It speeded while hissing and producing that rustling of dry leaves.

Within no time it was on a tree. It moved swiftly from one branch to another.

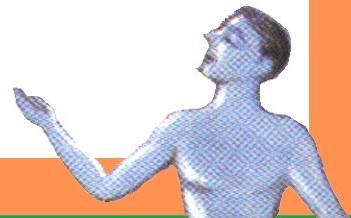
By the time it went on the tree, we came to senses. Probably this was because now it was far away from us!

Now we heard the noise made by the squirrel. By now it had reached the top of the tree. That seven to eight feet long snake was chasing the squirrel!

I had never experienced nature in this form. I had never seen even in exhibitions, this long snake.

What could we do with those sticks? It would have at best tickled the snake! The squirrel raced its way to safety. We would have been paralyzed if it were to chase us.

We avoided going ahead with the supervision on that day! No need to state why!



Missed call

Appasaheb Patvardhan was a great philosopher and social reformer. He toiled for the welfare of scavengers. In earlier days the scavengers had carry the excreta on their head. He was referred with respect as Mahatma Gandhi of Konkan. The place he worked was about thirty miles from Adeli. This place was termed Gopuri. That meant the place of cow.

This great person discovered and popularized new and environment friendly models of latrines. They are called Gopuri latrines.

It is unfortunate that the Gopuri latrines are sabotaged and neglected. According my friend Dr. Ashok Kale it is essential to reexamine the present western model of latrines. He has several points, which merit careful attention and thought and action.

We began the construction of Gopuri latrines. The beginning remained in stage of beginning for quite some time! The walls were constructed and carpenters and the masons disappeared for several months.

Anna was ready to budge. He nailed the carpets in place of doors. He provided stones to keep on the lower portion of the carpets to avoid their flying.

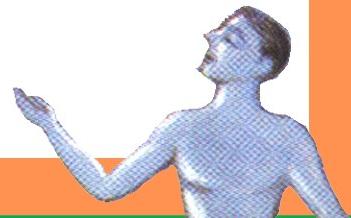
Now the latrines were ready for use. One was for the patients and one for us.

One had to carry water in a tumbler. It was customary for us to go to latrines before morning. This was to avoid embarrassment.

But that day some one came running before sunrise!

He caught me right in front of the latrine. I stood with the tumbler in hand.

He requested for home visit.



I explained that I did not have motorcycle. Anna took it to Vengurla.

He urged to come on bicycle.

I had to keep away the tumbler. I had to drop the idea of visiting latrine. In stead I had to get ready. I had to visit his house, though for different purpose.

His house was about five to six miles away. The visit consumed about four hours. By the time I returned it was half past nine.

Already there was large number of patients waiting for me.

I had no other choice but to skip thought of latrine again!

I entered the OPD and began to look after the patients.

Now was the turn of elderly individual. He was tall and erect. He looked robust. When asked about his problem he stopped me.

“First let me congratulate you.”

I was puzzled.

“You are doing a great job. You have come in this village” he continued.

I thought he had come with readymade speech.

With so many patients waiting and my morning ablution pending I started getting uneasy.

“Please tell me what is wrong with you”

I tried cut short his speech”

“No. Let me finish. I know ministers. They stop by and talk to me even on the road” He continued.

“Please. So many patients are waiting” I urged him to come to the point.

“No. I must tell you that I fully support you”



“O.K. We will discuss it at length. Let me deal with the other patients first “

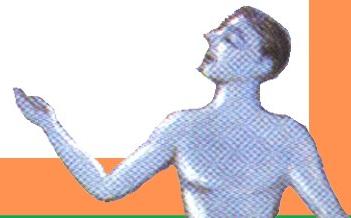
I asserted.

“No. No. I will tell. I have pain in chest and back.” At last he spoke about his problem!

I examined and prescribed.

By the time the OPD was over about two o'clock in the afternoon.

Now I had time to answer the call of nature that I had missed.



Filthy fishing

That morning Hema came with a complaint. She told Aayaa refused to clean the latrine.

I could not believe. Aayaa was very sincere at work. She was a bit slow. But that was because she was old.

“What is the problem” I asked

Hema said, “Aayaa is saying that it is extremely dirty”

“Let us see” I got up.

I asked the patients to wait and set out see what was wrong.

We cam to the latrine. It was stinking like a hell.

Exercising tremendous restraint I peeped inside the latrine.

The pot was full.

I agreed with Aayaa. Really it was obnoxious. Her complaint was justified.

But I could not complain to any one. I had to find a solution.

I thought over for a while. Suddenly I had an idea.

I asked Mungekar to bring a long stick.

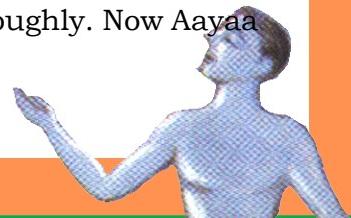
He brought one.

I took a long and sturdy nail and hit it at the tip of the stick.

Then I went to the latrine again. I put the stick with hook in the pot and started fishing.

After a couple of minutes, I could fish out something. Immediately then pot became empty.

Then asked to get water cleaned it thoroughly. Now Aayaa



could work.

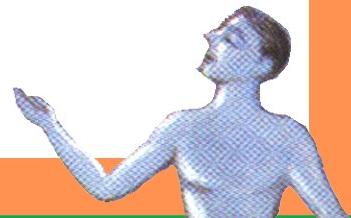
Imagine what it I had fished out.

It was a piece of cloth. Somebody had thrown it there.
This tendency was more disgusting than what I cleaned.

I instructed Hema to warn the inhabitants of the hospital
against this kind of irresponsible behavior.

The problem was solved.

I returned to OPD.



Volleyball

Some times we tried very hard at some projects but could not succeed.

Having seen the overall lack of enthusiasm we thought some sports activity could help rejuvenate the spirits. We thought sports would help some youngsters to come together and instill enthusiasm in them. That could then be channelized into some more creative, productive work.

We started wondering what sports could we think of?

Could we think of billiards, golf, horse polo, water polo, cricket, baseball and so on?

All this was unthinkable.

In that situation what could be feasible?

The only options were kabaddi and volleyball.

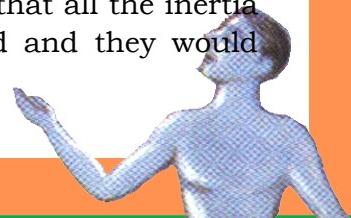
Amongst the two, kabaddi could cause injury and soil the clothes. But volleyball appeared feasible.

Volleyball required a court for which we had enough space and a ball and net that we could buy from Vengurla.

This would not incur lot of expenses, we thought.

The only hitch was that of preparing the court.

The only way was to start and then expect some help and some momentum. Though we were far from experts in volleyball and the rules and regulations of the game, we decided to go ahead prepare the court. Looking back at the episode I think how we had become so dreamy! We could dream everything. We dreamt a beautiful volleyball ground with a net stretched at the centered in place which was awkwardly and unevenly slopped and was full of grass grown waist high. We dreamt that all the inertia amongst the youth would get drained and they would



strong on the court to play volleyball. We dreamt healthy youngsters playing vigorously that masculine outdoor game! We dreamt hustle bustle, the laughter, the noises, the friendly quarrels and so on! The dream propelled us to start work.

Both of us started working in our campus. We began to level the ground. Our intention was to prepare a beautiful plane volleyball court.

Some youngsters used to sit in a house right across the road. We were almost sure that when they would see us working they would come at enquire about what was going on. We were planning in our mind to tell them the dreams and see their eyes brightened up with eagerness to work and actualize the dream.

But to our utter dismay none came.

Once some one casually asked as to what we were up to. I explained and him and appealed him to join us. It appeared he repented for having enquired! He was visibly reluctant to join hands.

But he appeared afraid to refuse as he thought that could hurt us and then in times of difficulty we might as well refuse to help him.

So with great reluctance he joined.

Somehow after some days some more joined as matter of formality and obligation. After some days' work the ground became somewhat playable.

We procured a net and a ball.

But the problem was not over. How could we get players sufficient for two teams?

The youngsters [not to say anything about the elderly] were not interested even in playing. It might be that they felt shy though. Besides apathy, lethargy and shyness, the unending worry about the future and hopelessness could also have paralyzed the young people. Some youngsters

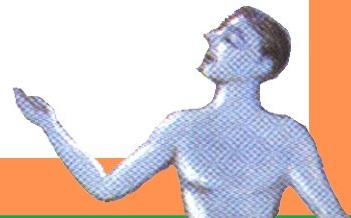


were dreaming of coming to Mumbai and getting some jobs somewhere in some factory or some mill. They seemed preoccupied with their dreams.

So we two played volleyball on the first day.

Second day some more players joined us, after inviting.

Third day the ball got deflated due to some reason. We sent it to Vengurla for getting inflated but the ball and the sports activity were never inflated again!



Monsoon

Monsoon had many moods. The first monsoon in Adeli was really memorable. Just before it began a peculiar kind of birds started flying around in large number. They knew it was about to rain.

Within few days of rain the brownish yellow and dry grass started becoming lush green and lively. Then started the dance and music of yellow and greenish frogs. Their croaking broke the silence at day and night.



I had heard words, "showers", "showers with thunder", "heavy showers" and "drizzling". None of these words could describe rain in Adeli. In Adeli it used to pour. The lightening and thunders were frightening. They reminded us of the deaths due to lightening. One felt like being left to the mercy of nature.

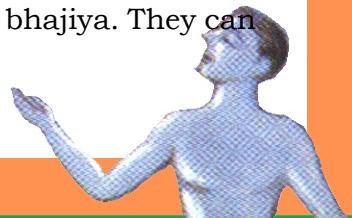
Every nook and corner got filled with water. Every pit, every ditch, every gutter, every rivulet was overflowed.

The gutters and rivulets started overflowing.

The rain infused every living being with life.

Farmers were charged with new enthusiasm. They started working with new hope.

Because of the chill in the weather, one felt like enjoying spicy delicacies. Pednekar's house cum restaurant became crowded. The demand for bhajiya and shev increased. One has to relish crunchy shec and hot bhajiya. They can not be described.



On the eastern side of premises was located a primary school. The children started dancing and singing.

It took me down the memory lane into my school days.

The monsoon brought new activities. Girls liked balsam, ferns. Boys would get them for girls and girls would give them roasted tamarind seeds. Some put caterpillars on other's body and enjoyed the itching caused by it. Many enjoyed roasted salted peas and peanuts. Some played with the snail. Snails a strange reputation. We believed that the touch of snail causes loss of hair in that area.

The monsoon was always associated with Ganapati and Sarasvati festivals.

The children staged their performances. One of the popular dance was

GUDGHA GUDGHA CHIKHALAT PAY ROVILE HO PAYA ROVILE

[I am in knee deep mud and enjoying!] The fun of playing in mud and ponds is lost when starts getting worried about status, clothes and such things.

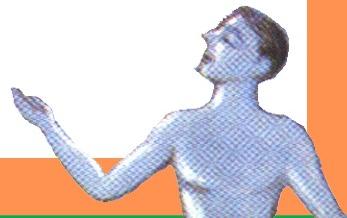
Another was a song addressed to immortal romantic Lord Krishna the son of Nanda. The gopis are calling him, “Oh my beloved, my soul mate son of Nanda”

JEEVACHYA JEEVALAGA NANDALALA RE NANDALALA RE NANDALALA RE

One year, during Ganapati immersion my friend Kubal died. He was drowned. I think that was when I was in third standard.

The attendance to OPD was thinned. The farmer was in the farms. Even the family members had to join in tilling, sowing, planting.

During monsoon, Aai used to roast cashew seeds. We spent our time relishing cashew seeds and exchanging and sharing views.



The plantation of ayurvedic herbs, productive education, utilization of natural resources and such many issues appeared in discussions.

After first month the farmers got relatively free and OPD got crowded.

During those days one minister happened to visit our place.

He was respectfully shown the wards and patients who were under treatment.

Then there was a speech.

He reminded the people of their duty to give us cooperation.

The memories of that monsoon are not memories. That monsoon has not become a past. Our goals, like electricity have connected it the present and shall connect it to the future. Today all that was thought and dreamt during those days is maturing and fructifying. Nothing is gone. Everything is blossoming.



Conceptual clarity

I used to have lot of interaction with patients, patients' relatives, medical representatives, visitors and even our masons and carpenters.

Our mason Govind was from Goa. He had green eyes and copper complexion. He was robust and muscular. But his voice was a contrast to his looks. He spoke very gently and softly.

It was evening time. The sun had just set. The atmosphere had filled with golden yellow hue.

Mestry and mason had finished their work. I had become free from OPD work.

We sat under the cashew a tree near our OPD.

Govind said, "Doctor is like God."

I laughed at it.

"Why did you laugh?"

I said, "You guess."

Govind said, "We are villagers. You have seen city life. You must be finding me stupid"

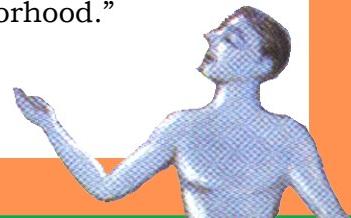
I said, "You are innocent"

"Why? Am I not correct?" he asked.

I asked, " Why do you think doctors are Gods?"

"We all work. But we rest and enjoy after day long labor. The doctors, in contrast, sacrifice their private life, their romance. To attend the emergency they have interrupt even their intercourse", Govind replied.

At this I once again laughed. I said, "Firstly every doctor does not do that. Secondly, "Even you would do that if there is a serious problem in the neighborhood."



Mestry and Govind both looked puzzled. They were not clear but could not refute my point as well.

I continued, “Anyone who does his job well is a decent person. One who works in the interest of global welfare is a divine. One whose bleeds for the welfare of millions is a saint. He whose body, instincts, emotions, intellect get consumed in the cause of global welfare is like a God. We all can come like God.”

“But we are so simple” Mestry expressed his doubt.

“You have the merit. But you did not have the opportunity to excel in your field. Your efforts in that direction would bring towards Godliness. In fact this is true with every field of art and science. The local and central governments must link the past of our civilization with the present and future. All indigenous heritage must be nurtured.”

Their eyes brightened up. They seemed to have discovered new dimension of their lives.

“One who uses his knowledge and expertise against the welfare of society is”, I waited for the answer.

“He is animal”, Govind said.

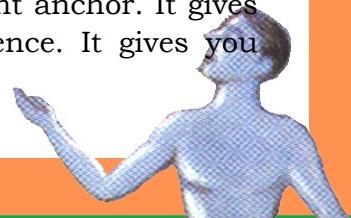
“No. Animals are innocent. Such person should be called devil”. Mestry opined.

I added, “Ignorance and indolence are the enemies. Inner growth through study and work for the global welfare constitute DHARMA. The happiness one gets through it is realization of God”.

They were ecstatic.

“What about the preaching of the galaxy of saints we had? They preached and practiced recitation remembrance of the name of God. How do you explain that?” Mestry asked.

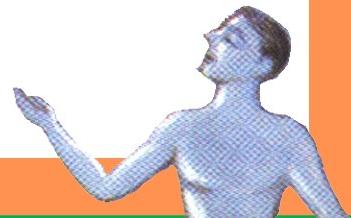
I said, “Reciting or remembering the name of God is NAMASMARAN. It is also called thought anchor. It gives you the capacity to rise above indolence. It gives you



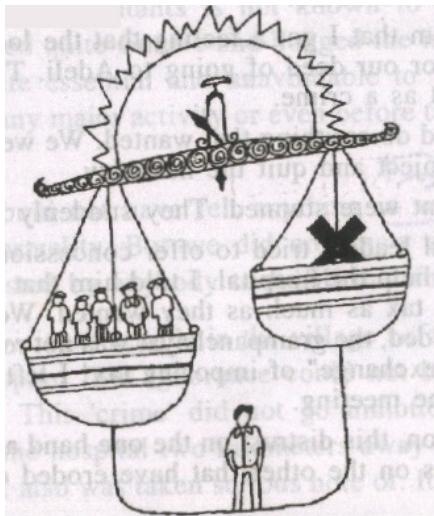
enthusiasm to study. It broadens you and helps you to get rid of pettiness. Thus it shows you, your DHARMA i.e., the most important purpose in life that can be totally fulfilling. Your DHARMA is study and work for global welfare in your field. This makes you increasingly happy. That is realization of God.”

My words seemed to fill them with sense of wonder rather than intellectual clarity. I enjoyed that. It might have boosted my ego. Because what ever I talked though was clear to me, was far from being realized.

But at that time that much clarity of concepts was enough to elevate my spirits. The moon rays caressed the premises. The whole area seemed to play with them.



Distrust



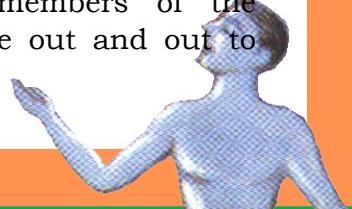
The local government in a village is called grampanchayat. It is a locally elected body. Gram means village. Panchayat is group of five people that traditionally headed the village. Five respectable used be elected by consensus. They used to settle controversies and harmonize the village. In Adeli also there was a grampanchayat.

We started hospital in Khutval that is actually not a part of the village. It is like an out-skirt. It is about two miles from the main village. This act of ours appeared to hurt the feelings of some local leaders who thought they were neglected. They thought we had outraged their authority. They thought they had been bypassed before we took the decision to start the hospital.

This was understandable too. It is usual with politicians that they like to take credit for every development and it is also usual for them to be jealous and restless any developmental activity that starts elsewhere and for which their political rivals get credit. The politicians do try to create trouble for any activity that gives credit to their rivals.

The local leaders thus did not feel comfortable for another reason also. They thought they were "socialist" and from their point of view, we were capitalist.

As a result they influenced the members of the grampanchayat to think that we were out and out to



make money and that we were therefore duty bound to contribute to the welfare of the village, in the form of tax. The tax would be in accordance with valuation of the “property of the hospital”! The members seemed to be convinced about our “intentions and ulterior motive”.

They surveyed and evaluated the premises of the hospital and decided to impose the tax on our hospital. But it seemed that some of the members felt that it would not be appropriate to do such a thing without taking us in confidence.

So we were invited as guests to the grampanchayat and were informed about the plans of the local leaders.

I told them that they had failed to appreciate that the divisions viz. capitalist and proletariat were deceptive in such. We whom these local “socialist” leaders considered capitalist were to actually give up all lucrative options in the urban practice and opt for going through all the hardships, risks, dangers and challenges. We were to actually work and work far more devotedly, committedly and longer than any employed worker or an employer. Moreover the hospital had not yet started full fledge and it was to incur recurring expenses for years before it could be well equipped. Imposition of tax would mean that an activity beneficial to a proletariat was to come in jeopardy.

The question of development was also deceptive because presence of a well-equipped hospital in a village itself would be a matter of development. By imposing tax, the growth of the hospital and hence the most important aspect of the development of the village was to itself to get thwarted.

Then I told them that I got a feeling that the local leaders were punishing us, for our deed of going to Adeli. This amounted to adjudge our act as a crime.

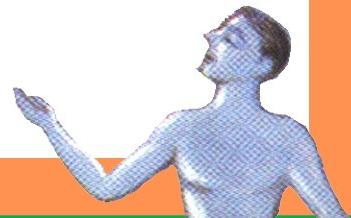
I said they could do anything that wanted. We were ever ready to wind up the project and quit the next day.



All those present there stunned. They suddenly became quiet.

One of the local leaders tried to offer concession in the tax. He even offered to help the hospital. I told him that they could very well charge the tax as much as they wanted. We were ready to quit. I further added, the grampanchayat had was not required to “help” our project “in exchange” of imposing tax! I left the decision to them and left the meeting.

It is this suspicion, this distrust that has eroded our social life on the one hand and blind belief and superstitions on the other.



Rombat

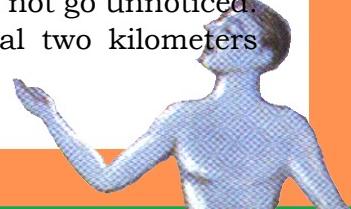
In the villages in Konkan i.e. west coastline of Maharashtra, there is a peculiar tradition of arranging a procession on the auspicious day of Holi. Holi is a festival celebrated in most of the villages.

In Adeli also there used to be a procession. The local and prominent villagers used to take the idol of village deity Someshvar and go around the village blessing every house. In subtler way this also meant approval of the local leaders to your living in the village. The disapproval or resentment was expressed and demonstrated by denying the blessings of the deity!

One of the conventions was to visit the village deity and take His approval and His blessings before starting any project. It was a popular belief that if one did not take such blessings then there would be no blessings and no success. Not visiting the temple invited the wrath of the local leaders and prominent inhabitants also. Whether this was genuine feeling of all the villagers based on experience or whether it was a deliberately spread belief to increase the importance of the temple and thereby that of the local leaders and inhabitants is not known to me. The belief however appeared quite sincere and bogged the minds of people. They felt it quite essential and unavoidable to visit the temple before starting any major activity or even before taking any major decision.

Actually we would not have felt anything wrong in going and fulfilling the formality. But we did not know about it and we were not suggested by anybody to fulfill that formality.

So we did not visit the temple in the village before or even after starting the hospital. But ignorance could not be an excuse for such a crime. This crime did not go unnoticed. Apart from having started the hospital two kilometers



away from the village proper, this fact also was taken serious note of. It became a major issue. Not going to the temple before even after starting the hospital amounted to being heretic. We were declared heretic.

The local leaders and the original inhabitants of the village could not tolerate such a thing. Not visiting the temple amounted to insulting the whole village, or so they made it look that way. The anger about our behavior was expressed in at right time.

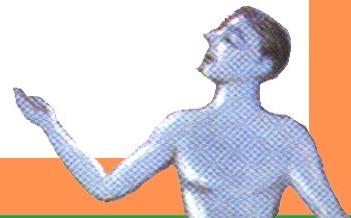
The traditional procession of village deity named rombat. The meaning of the word rombat is noise, commotion etc. The procession used to be full of dances, music band, disguises and so on. The rombat has some faint similarity to Halloween.

The rombat did not visit and bless our place!

My nurse told me that this was disapproving threatening besides boycotting.

Anyone who is boycotted this way feels scared of the wrath of the local God. He becomes miserable.

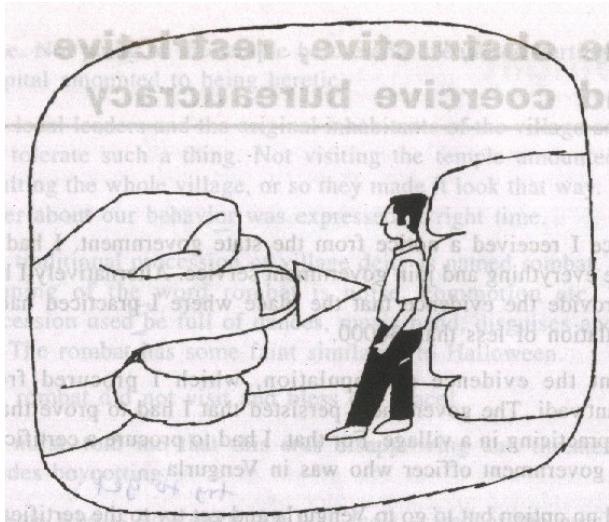
Looking back at the whole episode, I feel that the local leaders and the villagers could very well give the suspension of our hospital as an evidence of the wrath of the deity. The authority of the local original inhabitants and the local leaders could reign the minds of people, through the disapproval, denial of blessings, threatening and boycotting. Whether one could call this emotional black mailing or not I do not know, but it seems to have been working for centuries.



The obstructive restrictive and coercive bureaucracy

Once I received a notice from the state government. I had to leave everything and join government service. Alternatively I had to provide the evidence that the place where I practiced had a population of less than 30000.

I sent the evidence of population, which I procured from Savantwadi. The government persisted that I had to prove that I was practicing in a village. For that, I had to procure a certificate of a government officer who was in Vengurla.



I had no option but to go to Vengurla and try to get the certificate.

Looking back at the incidence it becomes clear that in India you have to take permission even to sneeze and for that you have to pay. This payment is black money. This is the one, which would go in most unproductive causes and hence deprive the nation of any chance of development. All political parties seem to be thriving on this and hence in turn promoting this. This is why when it was so obvious



that I worked in village, which could be confirmed by a simple phone I was forced to approach the officer.

In those days however I was unaware of the monstrous nature of the bureaucracy and hence kept on going to Vengurla with the innocent hope of getting the certificate.

I went several times to the office of the concerned officer in Vengurla. But he kept on dillydallying. He said that he knew that I practiced in Adeli. There was no doubt whatsoever. But he said that he would not give certificate unless and until he actually came to Adeli and verified the fact. He further added that he would come to Adeli only when it was suitable for him that is he was on his way to Savantwadi.

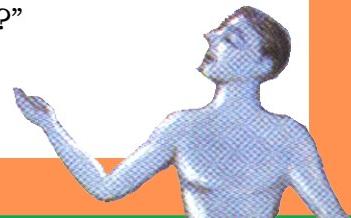
The government office was pressing for the certificate and this officer was not giving one.

I was getting really perturbed. Actually people who evade income tax of millions and billions of rupees never would get disturbed or perturbed by such small incidences. But the language of government correspondence, again the legacy of British rulers is usually found threatening by most innocent people! So did I.

Ultimately one day when on his way to Savantwadi, he came to Adeli and obliged when I had reached the point of breaking.

But contrary to what I expected he did not give the certificate even after verifying the fact. He delayed it and deliberately so for another month or so. He obliged me with a certificate, only after torturing me for that another month.

But the most surprising thing was that he gave explanation for why he took "revenge". He said, "Doctor you must have suffered. But then why should your brother not give my family, free polio doses? If you proclaim that you are social workers then why should have I to pay?"

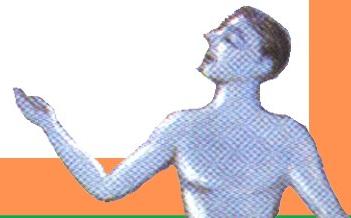


That time I realized what power of nuisance the British people have left in the bureaucratic setup.

It is probably true with every colonial country and especially the British colonial country that its bureaucracy is almost always against the people. This is because it was meant for suspecting, supervising and checking every activity. In fact it was meant for restricting everything indigenous and benefiting the ruler nation and rulers' economy. That is not all. The bureaucracies were developed in such a way as to exploit the people and support the government in return. Most of the government jobs created were unproductive and simply eroded the economy of the nation in legitimate as well as illegal ways. The government servants were supposed to harass the public in every possible way and not give service and help the development of the nation.

What was true about bureaucracy was also true for education. The education was meant to paralyze the productive forces of the colonial country and to inculcate feeling of inferiority, diffidence, loyalty, gratitude and sense of dependence towards the ruling nation. British did it efficiently. Many generations of India really became clerical, slavish, unproductive, diffident and permanent admirers of the British rule. They became self-haters. They hated their own countrymen and praised the British. They hated their countrymen even more if they hated and opposed British!

Just as the local leaders, prominent inhabitants with vested interest for authority and dominance, the bureaucrats also had their misgivings of this sort and this was his way of punishing me for my crime of going to Adeli.



The darkness of ignorance blocked the chance of life

That evening was quite dull. There were no new patients. There was nothing to be done. Even the instructions also were given and the nurse knew everything about what was to be done, with respect to every indoor patient..

As I was about to leave, a man came running. He was looking horrified. The sense of urgency and emergency was visible in his eyes.

I hurriedly asked him what was wrong.

He was breathless and too confused to answer at once.

When assured and asked him to cool down and relax and explain what had happened he somehow said, "Brother is serious".

I then asked him to narrate step by step what had happened so that we come to certain conclusion quickly.

But he kept on repeating the same, "Brother is serious"

Apparently he did not know much. The other possibility was that the elders in the home might have warned him not to disclose what actually had happened. Sometimes this was done if there were a foul play, to make sure that the doctor takes up the case and does not refuse it as a medico-legal case. If it is a medico-legal case it creates lot of inconvenience and hence many times, a private doctor refuses a medico-legal case.

But at that time I did not know anything and did not guess anything either. I simply tried to convince him to bring the patient to the hospital. But he kept on insisting that all the senior family members had strictly instructed him that he persuades me to make the home visit.

After he kept on insisting I gave up the efforts to extract the history of what had happened and decided to visit his place.



The only conveyance, which could take me at least half way to his house, was motorcycle and I had to carry him as well with me on motorcycle. I took him double seat on motorcycle and started for his house. After about fifteen minutes ride, he asked me to park the motor cycle. He started walking without even bothering to explain how long it would take. He kept walking and when I asked how far it was, he just kept saying that it nearby only. It started getting late. I started feeling uneasy. After about forty-five minutes fairly exhausting walk through farms, ups and downs, we reached his house.

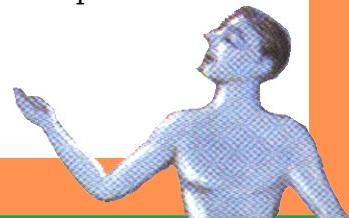
I rushed to examine the patient. He was indeed serious. It was a case of poisoning. The bottle of the poison was lying there. The patient was gasping. It was emergency and admission was a must, as that could continuous monitoring.

I advised admission.

His elder brother declined. I was shocked.

Not only because he refused, but because the way he seemed totally closed to my suggestion. I made me feel my existence irrelevant. When I tried to explain the gravity of situation, he clarified that it was because it was a new moon day. It was inauspicious time. If at all he had to shift the patient out of the house then consultation with the priest was a must. I could not understand how in medical matters priest was involved and not merely involved but had the final say in the matter. His decision would be final, no matter what I, the doctor advised.

Gradually I realized that the life in villages is tightly knitted. The priest would be required for every occasion. If he were not consulted once then could refuse to work in future in every kid of activity. Tilling, sowing, planting, cutting, pounding everything was required by tradition and consensus, be done according to the advice of the priest. The life could come to standstill if the priest struck the work!

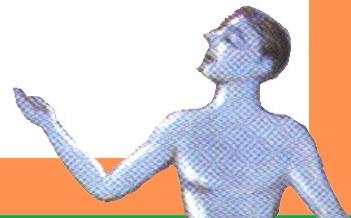


“But he is in bad condition. There is a risk to his life.”

He said, “I agree and have faith in you. But the traditions and customs are above everything. Life and death are beyond human control. The life would be meaningless in absence of customs and traditions. They are based on supreme knowledge of the ancestors. We won’t do anything against the religion. What ever happens to him is his luck.”

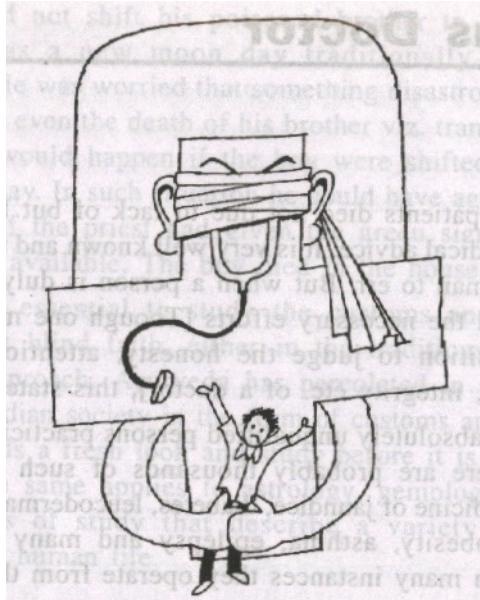
Finally, he did not shift his poisoned brother to the hospital because it was a new moon day traditionally considered inauspicious. He was worried that something disastrous, far more disastrous than even the death of his brother viz. transgression of the tradition, would happen if the boy were shifted out of the home on that day. In such situation he could have agreed to shift the boy only if the priest had given the green signal. But the priest was not available. The boy died in the house.

It seems very essential to study the customs and traditions keenly without blind faith, either in the traditions, or in the mechanistic approach. The Ayurveda has percolated in most of the strata of the Indian society in the form of customs and traditions and hence needs a fresh look and study before it is condemned or adored. The same applies to astrology, gemology and such other branches of study that describe a variety of factors influencing the human life.



Serious doctor

Sometimes patients died not due to lack of but because of the so-called medical advice. It is very well known and understandable that it is human to err. But when a person is duly qualified and has taken all the necessary efforts [Though one may not always be in a position to judge the honesty, attention, dedication, involvement, integrity etc. of doctor], this statement is true.

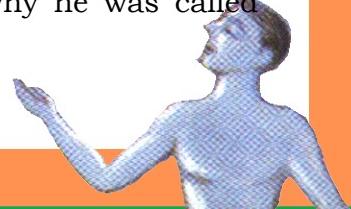


What about absolutely unqualified persons practicing as doctors? In India there are probably millions of such doctors! They dispense medicine of jaundice, diabetes, leucoderma [white patches on body], obesity, asthma, epilepsy and many other chronic disorders! In many instances they operate from their houses.

In fact once upon a time compounders, after certain years of service were given permission to practice. They were given a certificate. They were called registered medical practitioners. The word RMP in those days connoted a doctor without qualification.

In and around Adeli also there were such "doctors" practicing their specialties. One of them was this individual who was called "serious doctor".

Initially I used to be puzzled as to why he was called serious!



I could not figure out as to whether he was not well, or he took his profession very seriously or he lacked element of humor. During my visits to Savantwadi I used to see his dispensary which was located on the main road.

Once I happened to visit his “dispensary” also. It was decorated with saline bottles with long tubes hanging on walls in different places. There were some glossy posters used by the medical representatives as visual aid and distributed by them as promotional literature. He had taken ingenious efforts to make his look dispensary “medical” in every respect. He had made use of the concept of environmentalization very efficiently. He was surely able to get enough number of patients, who remained patiently loyal to him!

So coming back to the question, why was he called a serious doctor?

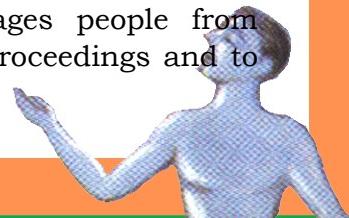
It was because the “doctor” had his own “serious” style!

Every time he examined a patient, he used to put the stethoscope anywhere and everywhere he wanted. He put it on buttocks, knees, feet, head, ears and so on. He had an explanation for this. The part in question had to be examined. Examining by eyes and palpation by hands was not adequate. It had to be listened to as well.

The patients and the relatives of the patients were thus thoroughly convinced about the deep concern, methodical approach, meticulousness and his readiness to spend as much energy and time needed for the patient. His involvement was demonstrated in an emphatic manner. But this was not the reason why he was called serious.

After thorough and apparently painstaking “examination” he would make his face look pensive, worried and tense. He would start appearing “serious” as if because some impending danger was seen by him and then keep quiet for some time.

All the people gathered, as in villages people from neighborhood also gather to see the proceedings and to



give moral courage to the patient and the relatives and also to get to know the doctor would eagerly wait to listen to what he would say about the patient.

Thus once the atmosphere of suspense was created, he would declare that the patient was serious.

Then he would offer two options to the family members. One was to shift the patient to a hospital but could be risky and the other was he would give all possible treatment and try to save the patient.

Usually the family members, by now convinced of patient's seriousness and the doctor's too, would opt for the second option.

Thus give the consent and he would start saline infusion on both sides. In addition he would give two injections, on two sides in the buttocks.

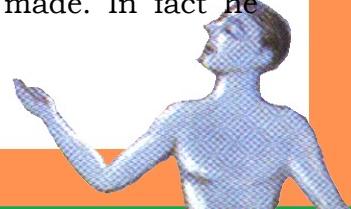
After this he would make his face even more serious as if he was pulling out the patient from hell and with all his knowledge and skill, and sit near the patient. He would keep on waiting. Intermittently examining the pulse, eyes, heart beats and so on.

The family members thus totally mesmerized would offer tea, biscuits and so on. He would initially pretend to refuse but then [apparently] reluctantly would have tea, biscuits, hot bhaji [a delicious, crunchy, crispy and spicy preparation] and even lunch.

He would take nap and smoke also. He would make himself comfortable in every possible way but at the insistence of the family members.

But one thing was certain he would not leave. He would keep on telling that he had to go as there would be patients waiting for him in the dispensary, yet he would not leave!

In case the patient survived he would get extraordinary acclaim for the Herculean efforts he made. In fact he would be revered!



In case the patient died then the “serious” doctor would join the family in crying. In this case also he was admired for his Herculean efforts. The blame went to bad luck.

The “serious” doctor won the battle irrespective of the outcome.

But he had some competitors too.

They used other techniques to glorify their lack of skills and their ignorance and use them to their advantage!

Once one old lady told me that the injection I gave was useless.

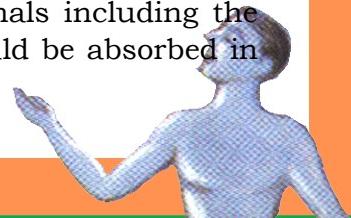
Initially I thought she was joking. Sometimes the patients exhibited strange ways of joking to which we were not familiar. I thought this was similar.

But she was really serious, unlike the “serious doctor”!

After asking repeatedly to explain why she felt so, and looking at my face now she seemed to be afraid. She seemed to feel awkward and guilty for having offended me!

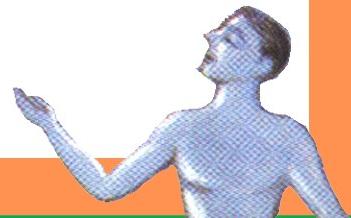
But at last while simultaneously apologizing, she clarified. “The bigger the injection, the better it is. The more the pain the more would be the benefit. The longer the pain lasts the more complete the cure. The smaller the injection, the lesser the quality, the lesser the pain the lesser the benefit and the shorter the pain lasts the more incomplete the cure and relief.”

Today I feel even as in those days that the seriousness of the problem of serious and similar doctors has to be seriously dealt with! It is high time that the people are educated in the concepts of holistic health, holistic medicine and get empowered. It is essential that they get familiar with the simple home remedies. The indigenous remedies must be given the due credibility and they should not be casually written off and/or looked down upon. The priests, RMPs and all other professionals including the traditional artisans could be and should be absorbed in



the mainstream of education, training and professional practice. They have to be made secure. In fact it has to be appreciated that all these including the “serious” doctor and the other similar ones were [and are] in no way inferior in terms of capacity. Many of them had [and have] the treasure of traditional knowledge. But they did not [and do not] know how to use it effectively. They have to be confided with. If this is done efficiently, then it could contribute to the welfare of the people as a whole.

But most importantly the education must include productive domain and holistic concepts right from the beginning. There books available on these and can surely be made use of.



The sick politician

Politicians, teachers and officers as of course many others, were idols. People respected them, emulated them. I happened to meet three of these.

Let us see the incidence of the politician.

It was a hot afternoon. I had finished OPD and was about to go for lunch. The nurse too had to go for lunch.

Just then, there appeared a person. This, erect, fair complexioned elderly person was clad in white. White coat, white shirt and white dhoti. Dhoti is white cloth thinner than the usual cotton cloth for stitching shirts. It is worn in different styles. He had well ironed white cap on his head. Behind the golden frame of his spectacles he had eyes that reflected authority and arrogance besides cunningness.

He walked in a majestic style and entered in the OPD as if it belonged to him, as if he was the chief of all of us.

Looking around in a way to judge the “standard” of the OPD he sat in front of me without waiting for my asking him to sit. He made himself absolutely comfortable.

I had heard about him and was under the impression that he commanded tremendous political and economic power, thanks to the propaganda and deliberately spread myths.

I respectfully asked him about his problem.

He said he had none but asked me to examine him.

I could not understand why he needed me to examine him. So I asked him why he wanted me to examine him. For a moment I thought he could have a problem that he was feeling shy to come out with or may be he wanted me to discover it. May be he wanted to judge my examination skills, as this was done sometimes by even some villagers!



But in any case I wanted him to tell the problem, as that is the way every doctor is supposed to proceed with patient. That is an essential step in dealing with any patient.

He seemed to realize that I wanted him to speak of some problem. He casually said that he was on his way to Savantwadi. He thought of getting down and meeting me and getting the experience of how I examined a patient. Then he added, "I have a complaint too". Then smilingly he said, "I have a problem of gas. After eating food I have to fart". Then in front of the young nurse and his assistants who accompanied him he actually and voluntarily farted and did so quite loudly. "This way", he said.

I was stunned for a moment and outraged too. But as a matter of respect for his age and also as a requirement in professional courtesy, I did not say anything.

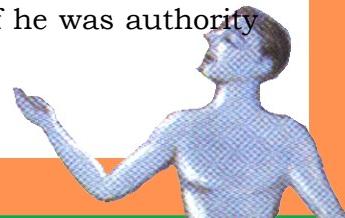
I was hungry and with that demonstration got upset. I started feeling uneasy in that situation and especially in his company. But I had no option. I had to demonstrate to him my examination skills and get his acclaim or appreciation, with the hope that he spreads a good word about us.

Now and even at that time I felt pity about myself and the conscientious and genuinely philanthropic individuals who have to salute and kneel in front of those who are in centers of political, economical and muscle and other powers.

The gas trouble is a routine complaint of many people who lead sedentary life. But in many instances it is due to infection with some parasites such as amoeba, giardia etc. I just thought little bit about the complaint so as to get rid of the other mental agitation.

I then examined him thoroughly. There was nothing wrong in his agile old body.

He was satisfied or did he say and as a head master would praise his student, he praised me as if he was authority in medicine also.

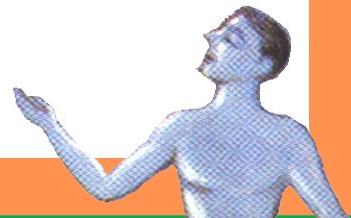


Within a second he got up from the examination bed and started walking. I mechanically accompanied him. He did not look at me. He walked to his jeep.

He got in the jeep raced towards Savantwadi.

I stood in the dust blown by its rear wheels.

No fees, no thanks, only dust. He never bothered to give any help directly or indirectly. I realize now the importance of resecting one's own self. The gullibility of looking at the others with meekness is tantamount to insult oneself and one's own mission.



The attitudes

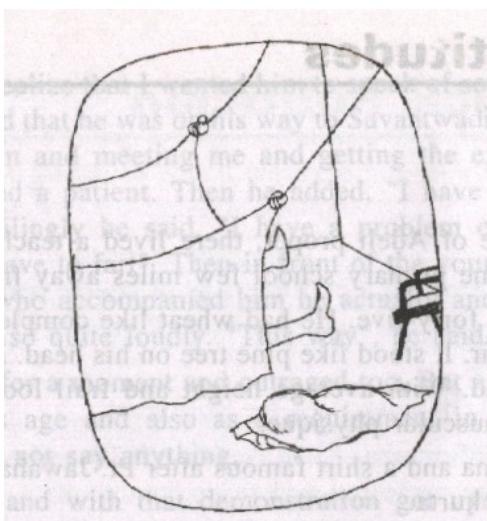
In the village of Adeli proper there lived a teacher. He was a teacher in some primary school few miles away from Adeli.

He was about forty-five. He had wheat like complexion. He had thick curly hair. It stood like pine tree on his head. He had a very broad forehead. With average height and frail look he actually had a good muscular physique.

He used pajama and a shirt famous after Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. It is also called kurta.

Like many people in villages he was gifted with art of singing. Once he had actually sung bhajan on one occasion. I found it melodious as well as quite skillful. He had flair for acting too. With these qualities and as one of the original inhabitants of the village he had earned some degree of respectability and prominence in and around Adeli. Or so did I feel. He conducted himself fairly well which could be why I felt so.

As a family person he seemed to be happy too.



But what about his family, was it happy?

He had several children who did not seem to be cared for adequately. His wife did not seem to care for it as well. This could be because this teacher had total control on everything in family including the number of deliveries his wife would have to undergo, the number of



children and also the quality of life his children would be offered, in terms of food, clothes, education and so on.

But he did not believe in family planning. He therefore made it a point not to undergo an operation for preventing childbirth and did not allow his wife to undergo either. He did not bother about or believe in the fact that the number of deliveries could adversely affect his wife's health.

So in the course of time fruitful intercourse took place and his wife was once again pregnant. As a proud man with so much fertility even at that age, he came to our hospital with us and enrolled her name for prenatal care and delivery.

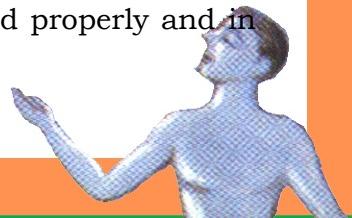
Her name was registered in our hospital.

But he did not seem to believe in taking any kind of trouble as a responsible father. He was basically a proud father!

So his wife was neither by him nor by anybody else in the family brought to the hospital for regular check up. No prenatal care of the pregnant lady was taken. This could be because this was not a priority in budgetary allocation of funds!

One night I received a message for home visit, from him. It was nighttime and the road was not even a well-built up tar road or cement road. It was simply a way on which people could somehow walk. There was grass, many stones and pits and ditches on that unevenness "path". It was risky to go at night because this condition of the road could cause accident of the cycle or motorcycle and also because there was genuine danger of a poisonous snake, a scorpion or even some other animal attacking a person.

Somehow I could not refuse even when I was disturbed by the fact that after repeatedly reminding the lady was not brought for prenatal examination and care. Had that been the case she could have been admitted in the hospital and her delivery could have been conducted properly and in time and safely.



When I reached his house I saw a nauseating sight. In the porch itself in dim light this lady was lying in a corner. All around her there was dirty linen. Some blood soaked clothes and other products of delivery were also lying around. I felt disgusted. The lady was blank. There was no expression. Neither there was no pain for having lost the child nor there was agony for the injustice and neglect she had undergone. There was no complaint about the husband or anybody. There was no feeling of any kind. The treatment given to her by her husband and may be others at home, had killed her and left only a corpse to exist! For all practical purposes she was dead. There were no romance, no dreams, no expectations, no aspirations, nothing. Only her body was existing. Her face was like a mask.

Her presence in that filthy atmosphere made it pathetic. The child was dead. Its body was wrapped I a clothe and lying there.

The teacher had performed the formality of inviting for the home visit. He never felt anything about the whole incidence either.

For me it was only a formality too. I simply had to witness it, get it carved in my mind and get out without even thinking about the fees.

But that was not all once this teacher sent a message that he was serious.

I had doubt about the truth involved in the message. But could not take a risk. He could be really unwell as well. In that case our name could have got maligned. I went.

When I reached his house I was really surprised. I could not believe in the scene!

The teacher was sitting comfortably in the easy chair! There was o sign of disease, illness, pan or any kind of discomfort!

Ignoring the expressions on face he welcomed me



gracefully.

I almost shouted, "I was told that you were serious. You seem to be fine. What is wrong with you? Why did you call me?"

Suddenly his voice became muffled and soft. He started complaining of pain in a variety of regions. He started pretending that he was unable to walk.

I examined him thoroughly. There was nothing wrong. He still kept on malingering that he was not able to walk.

I was fed up with his malingering. I held arms and forced him to stand along with me forced to walk with me. Then as if with great difficulty and pain he started gradually taking steps and became normal and came to leave me up to the fence.

There after he met me several times and got treated by me. I made several visits to his home also. But the teacher successfully exploited me. He continued his ways and his points of views and hence reciprocated the treatment and service given by me with backbiting, ridiculing and maligning us. He however taught me a lesson that wisdom, toughness and focus on making one's mission, project or business were very important for success.



National programs

The government in those days was apparently concerned about the population explosion. To bring down the rate of population growth, many incentives were declared. One of them was actual payment of some cash for undergoing the operations of birth control. To avoid the possibility of inadvertent operations by unqualified people, in poor setups and chances of false reports government had made a policy of recognizing private as well as philanthropic hospitals as family planning centers. This scheme was expected to facilitate the family planning program or population control program.

We applied for such recognition as that could save us some money and the patients could be benefited. In fact such recognition could add to the service we could provide and help us help people better.

Several days passed.

Ultimately one officer came.

I thought that he would be happy for we working in that village and would readily agree to give us the recognition immediately and readily.

But even as there had been lot of improvement in our hospital since it had started and we had qualified person to perform the operations, he refused to recommend our hospital for recognition.

I was surprised. It seems I had always to be surprised by the attitudes and behavior of the people.

I asked him the reason. Instead of explaining or ridiculed our setup. He said that we did not have air-conditioned operation theater. This was shocking. Instead of having appreciation for someone serving in a village there was this tendency of using [or misusing] the bureaucratic power to run down the other person. He seemed or appeared to



feel that he was to pay us from his own pocket. But most important thing i.e. concern for his duty of facilitating the family planning program he seemed to interested in making us feel guilty for having applied. He seemed to tell us that we were stupid to apply for recognition.

Retrospectively looking at it seems that he might have expected bribe. It is said that if and when an officer expects bribe, he makes the concerned work look impossible and thereby subtly suggest that it could become possible only if extraordinary efforts, which could be taken if some bribe is paid, are taken.

I did not know this at that time. What I knew was that he was talking nonsense.

Because I knew that in those days operations were conducted even in open.

I argued with him for sometime. Then I appealed to him on the basis of his duty towards the national program and also towards the people.

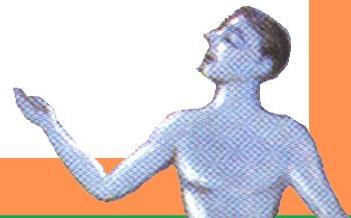
But he gave an expression that he knew everything. He in fact in the course of time told me that I was not required to teach him anything.

Probably he was right. He knew far more than I with respect to how to make money and use and misuse power. He knew how to extract maximum benefit from the service.

He was proved right in the sense that we left Adeli and suspended the hospital whereas he apparently [I do not know for sure] continued to enjoy the power with probably increasing gains for himself and accomplished his goal! We could not accomplish the goals and hence were failures.

However the discerning readers would immediately appreciate that success in stealing adequately is not superior to failure in giving adequately.

Our hospital was refused recognition as family planning center.



However that did not matter.

We kept working and the hospital kept growing in performance and reputation.

Looking at this incidence and the previous two, retrospectively, I feel that even as the politician gave me dust, the teacher gave me defamation and government officer gave me disapproval for our efforts now it becomes clear nothing else could have been expected. This is especially true in view of the education all these had received and the overall level of consciousness in the society, which nurtured their pride, passions, power, prejudice etc.

Moreover today I also feel that the problem of population is projected as the most important one by almost everyone, by looking at the rate of population and also at the rate of exhaustion of the resources. There is nothing wrong in this calculation except the fact that the several other points are not projected enough on being that of introduction and incorporation of the productive domain in education and jobs. In absence of the people will continue to live parasitically and erode the national as well global resources in all countries irrespective of the rate of the population. Holistic perspective of the health, medicine and life as such is another thing. If this is neglected then the global planning will remain as chaotic as it is today only usher in downfall and decay of the mankind.

It is interesting to note that in USA I witnessed myself that even in 1986 and 1987 many couples had more than four and five children. One doctor had six children!

Another interesting aspect of the theme of family planning or family welfare is that of the rich tradition of India. It has to be noted that there are instructions and guidelines with respect to the sexual intercourse between husband and wife. This perspective of well guided, romantic, humane and sublime sexuality present in Indian scriptures should be made use of all over the world rather than firstly



advocating and propagating animalistic sex and then propagating contraceptives.



Aatyaa the stressed

I have mentioned about Aayaa while telling you about "fishing". But I must correct here. Aayaa is a designation for sweeper. The aayaa was actually called Aatyaa. Aatyaa means father's sister. I am paying my tribute to her through this chapter named after her.

We could accomplish the construction of independent twin quarters for ourselves. The equipment such as X-ray machine was added.

Anna with his extraordinary technical talent got an operation table made by Mestry.

The staff also increased in number. In addition to Hema now there were Majarekar, Dalvi, Jadhav. There were Pednekar and Vilas Kambli. My friend Vitthal was also a part of the team.

Many times other friends came. They stayed. They loved. They helped. They discussed. They disturbed also. I confess that there were many erratic things we did. These things created trouble for my parents, Anna, his wife and even Tatya. In fact our activities created trouble for everybody. But that was probably the turbulence we all had to share. Even as decades have passed and even as all those troubled [including my friends] might have forgiven me for those things, I feel it apt to at least apologize for the same.

But there is no sense in dwelling on the details and either try to absolve or to condemn oneself. There is no sense trying to prove someone flawless and there is no sense in making someone feel guilty.

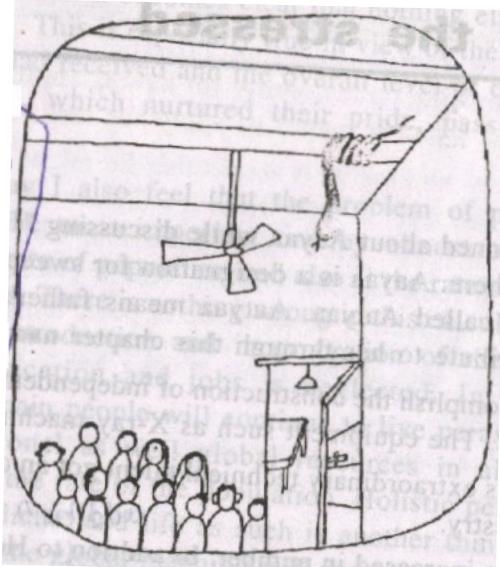
What I wish to recollect is Aatyaa. Aatyaa was a very loving and innocent lady. She was over sixty to sixty-five years. She was a widow and did not have children. She lived with her mother who was also a widow. She used to fashion



herself as a young lady. She walked in a rhythm. Her hair was curly and white. It flew when she walked. She was slow, but comfortable and gorgeous in her conduct.

She always smiled and many times blushed.

But that was not the whole story of Aatyaa.



She had worked hard and earned some money. This money was her life support. She had kept it with some one who was prestigious trustworthy and dependable. This used to be the practice of working people, as they did not have safe custody. They did not have well protected houses. This practice seen even today in Mumbai as many employees staying in slums do not feel safe to keep money in their house as the drunkard family members usually steal it or extort it.

The so-called prestigious person however breached her faith. In times when she most urgently required the money, he refused the fact that he kept any money with him!

This was totally unexpected. This shocked and shattered Aatyaa to such an extent that she lost her mental balance almost prominently. Many people laughed and mocked at her. They called her khuli, which meaning insane, mad.

I felt that around she was one of the few sane persons we had even amidst her lost balance!

As the hospital grew, more and more people came forward for help.



Shenai was our neighbor. Besides providing coffee he helped in several other ways. Most importantly he loved and cared for us. Dr. Masurekar, Datta Bandekar and Bal Bandekar helped us several ways. Local newspapers and many from Mumbai, Pune and Chiplun cooperated. The publicity was a part of work required to help the work grow in its content and its spread and reach to people. Several others from Adeli and surrounding areas also helped in many ways. I can not recall their names. But even as many decades have passed and even as they might have forgotten what they did, I thank them. I express my gratefulness to them. I wish them all the best in their life.

But the help one person gave can not be forgotten and can be left unmentioned.

That day the OPD was full. There may be more than fifty persons.

The OPD was a big hall. The roof was about fifteen feet in height. It was not a slab. It was made of mangalore tiles, which are prepared from clay by heating the clay, as is done in making of the bricks.

The hustle bustle of OPD was going on. Suddenly someone noticed a snake hanging on the bar of the roof.

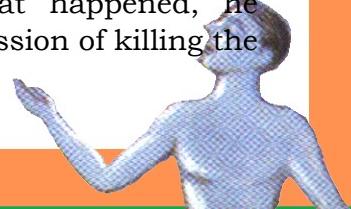
Everybody was in panic.

It was a difficult situation. Something had to be done immediately.

I called Munegkar. But the snake was at such a height that one could hardly reach there even with the help of a ladder. Moreover there was genuine risk in that.

Just at that time Vijay Varadkar, who stayed across the road and used to visit the hospital frequently walked in. He was around six feet and sturdy. I felt somewhat relieved.

As soon as he came to know what happened, he immediately started working on the mission of killing the



snake. He judged the height and arranged the ladder. He took a stick and climbed on the ladder.

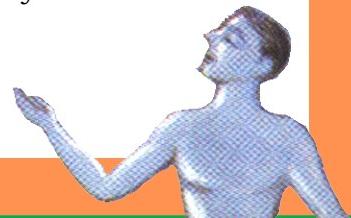
While he was doing so I remembered how quickly the snake had chased the squirrel. I also remembered how the snake had moved from one branch to another. I was tensed up by several thoughts.

This snake could also easily do the same. The snake could instantly turn and bite Vijay. Vijay would be dead. The snake could fall down. In case the snake was not hit properly, and fell down it could move in any direction and bite anyone from patients, their relatives, visitors and even the staff members.. This was quite possible because it was almost impossible to reach it. Vijay was literally hanging and stretching like anything to reach it. Alternatively, if after falling entered the ward which by the side of OPD and hid there, it could make the stay and treatment of the patients impossible. The ladder could slip as the floor was slippery. That would make things worse for Vijay as well as everyone. This was so because no one else was as tall as Vijay, nobody else had the agility Vijay had and nobody had the daring he had. So the snake would remain there all the time threatening the safety of the patients and the staff members.

However while I was tense with these thoughts Vijay was busy in his mission. Even though he was tall, he also barely reached the snake with that stick. But he almost hanged in the air and hit the snake. Fortunately for us and unfortunately for the snake Vijay hit hard and accurately on the head of the snake. It fell down almost dead.

Mungekar who reached by that time, finished the remaining formality.

Vijay had great love for my mother and father who had also joined us by then. He used to bring jackfruits and other vegetables, which my parents enjoyed. Unfortunately he is no more. I pray for him and the family members ones whom he left behind.



Maggots

That morning it started stinking in the OPD.

I noticed it. But such things did not alarm one in a village set up as ours was. It could happen due to some rat rotting somewhere or some other animal or somebody frying some dry fish somewhere in the neighborhood.

I finished the examination and treatment of the case. I thought of taking rest. But that stench was annoying. So I changed my mind. I decided to finish the OPD and then go to the quarters and take rest.

I asked the nurse to call the next patient sitting outside.

One lady in her late twenties walked in with her daughter. Her daughter may be five or six. Her head was covered with a cloth. The clothes of the lady, clothes of the girl and cloth on the head all were extremely dirty.

One could make out from her walk that she was extremely nervous. She seemed to be afraid and totally diffident. She seemed to be uncertain about everything. There was confusion and disorientedness on her face. She looked extremely suspicious.

Her face and her walk caused some irritation to me. I did not like slowness.

Suddenly I noticed that the stench intensified as soon as she came near.

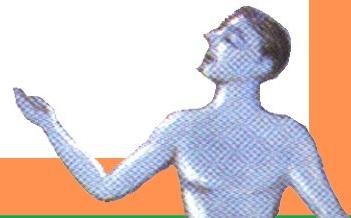
She said, "Ubale Jalelsat"

I failed to understand.

"Her daughter has developed boils on head", Hema explained.

"What is your name", I asked the daughter.

The girl shyly answered, Mangala".



The smell, the slowness and shyness all together, made it really unbearable.

To examine the boils I had to see them, inspect them. I asked Hema to remove that cloth from Mangala's head.

As soon as Hema removed the dirty cloth from Mangala's head I was taken aback by the sight!

I was shocked and dazed by what I saw. I felt giddy.

The head was full of boils and one of them was huge. It was full of maggots.

Instantly my disgust was transformed into anger and I exploded, "Are you not ashamed? You will be responsible if this girl dies! Why did not you come earlier?"

The lady was in tears. Mangala too was embarrassed.

A moment later I controlled myself. It was of no use shouting. It was not fair too. They had come for help and not for getting humiliated or insulted. I felt ashamed of myself. Really speaking, I was helpless. I felt as if I was carrying that huge boil. Those maggots came out my head. I was miserable. I was living in abyss. I felt not only the agony but the humiliation of Mangala as that of mine.

But shouting could not help my helplessness, it would only add to the humiliation of Mangala.

I balanced myself.

I removed some of the maggots with forceps.

But to my surprise there were far more inside than what appeared form outside.

It took several days before the last maggot was removed.

It took over a month for the boil to heal.

The mother was not from Adeli. She was from a neighboring place. She had come to stay with her parents, who were in Adeli.

Even as he stayed in the vicinity of the hospital she was

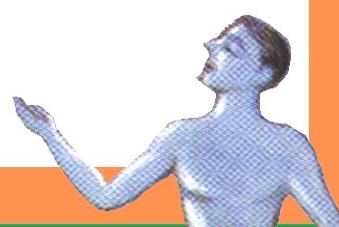


reluctant to come to the OPD. She did not have any money. Her parents also did not have any money. However some neighbors scolded her and explained that I would not bother about money. She could go to the hospital and get the treatment and pay later. With this assurance she developed the courage to step in the hospital and enter our OPD.

After this episode, all the maggots, which I had removed from Mangala's head kept on speaking to me several days and nights. They kept telling me, "India is the oldest and richest civilization in the world. It has the rich heritage of Vedas and Upanishadas. It has produced Ramayana, Mahabharata and Geeta. Indians are the most spiritual people. They are the most magnanimous people. India is world leader in philosophy. India is a largest democracy. In India, there is democratic socialism. India has the best constitution in the world. In Indian constitution there is provision for the welfare of everybody".

They kept telling me, "Abroad there is affluence but no love. There is sex but no family. There are swimming pools but there is no shame. There are schools and education but there is no respect for the elderly, teachers, family members. There are well-nourished bodies, but there are blue films and no morality. The children are happier but they start dating earlier. India is the best in the world. Do not bother about us and Magala".

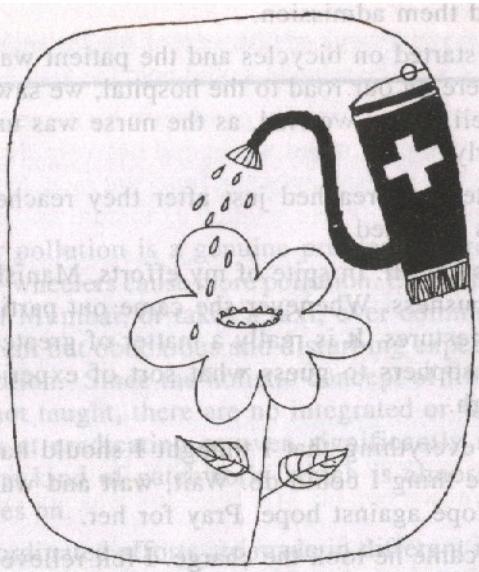
It is essential to understand and appreciate that these maggots from Magala's head taught me quite about what I have been doing in TSM. My TSM would never end until and unless those maggots disappear from my mind. This seems possible, only if at least 100 million children from India are freed from the child labor and/or beggary by inclusion of productive domain and holistic perspective about life in the formal education and non-formal education.



Manisha

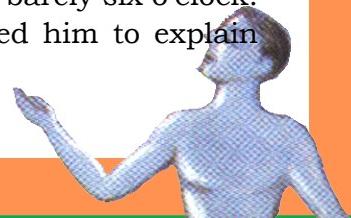
It was early morning. But I had got up and was sitting quietly in a chair in the garden in front of our quarters. The sunlight was indirect and dim, as sun was yet to rise above the horizon. While I was pondering on the speech, which the maggots Mangala's head kept on giving, I saw a middle-aged man come.

The gentleman was in his forties. His complexion was dark but looked pale. He was bent in his back. He was in short dirty dhoti and dirty bluish shirt with half sleeves. The word dhoti is not there in the world book English dictionary. So for those who do not know dhoti, I have to explain the meaning. I have explained it earlier but I will explain it again. Dhoti is a loincloth, usually white in color and is generally made from cotton. To visualize dhoti one should just visualize the picture of the man of the millenium Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He wore dhoti.



So this man in his forties came over to me where I was sitting. He had come on bicycle and looked quite tired. But he had strange way of looking at the ground while speaking. There was confidence. There was no force and clarity in the speech.

He requested me to go with him. It was barely six o'clock. So even the sun had not risen. I asked him to explain



what was wrong.

Then he told me that his small daughter had become unconscious. Everyone was worried and wanted me visit them at once. He kept urging and I had no other option but to agree.

But I said I did not have motor cycle. The distance was almost five miles. He instantly said that he would arrange a bicycle from the neighborhood.

It would have been really tiring and quite inconvenient. But since I had volunteered to go to Adeli work there, such occasions had to be expected and also accepted. There was no option of escaping from them. There was no sense then and there is no sense in grumbling about it. So I agreed and he arranged a bicycle from the neighborhood.

I went with him on a separate bicycle. After exercising all of my skills in riding that odd and old bicycle somehow I managed to be with him and after some time we reached the house, which was actually a shack on the main road, safely.

I was thinking about his daughter and hence before taking any rest I instantly turned at the patient.

The girl was four years old. She had high fever for last few days and vomited blood. She was losing her consciousness.

The girl's name was Manisha.

Manisha was given two injections in her two buttocks and two white tablets orally.

If I remember it correctly, "serious" doctor did this.

As I was not trained in pediatrics and as pediatricians had no thought of coming to Adeli, I had to do what best I could do.

In my view it seemed to be severe inflammation of stomach called gastritis. The white tablet that was likely to be aspirin caused this gastritis and bleeding according to



me.

But why was she losing consciousness? What was the possible reason? The fever could be viral fever or even typhoid. But once a patient becomes unconscious it becomes a very tricky problem, especially in that kind of setting.

I had to study the case further and do some investigations so that I could do something.

So I advised them admission.

So we both started on bicycles and the patient was taken in bus. While we were on our road to the hospital, we saw the bus going towards Adeli. I was worried, as the nurse was unlikely to have come so early.

But fortunately we reached just after they reached the hospital and she was admitted.

But that was not all. In spite of my efforts, Manisha was sinking in unconsciousness. Whenever she came out partially, she made frightening gestures. It is really a matter of greatest challenge to all the philosophers to guess what sort of experiences she was going through.

I had given everything that I thought I should have. Now there was only one thing I could do. Wait, wait and wait. Hope, hope and hope. Hope against hope. Pray for her.

When Anna came he took the charge. I felt relieved, as a medico because I believed that Anna knew more medicine than I. I had faith that he would do if anything else was left out or would make necessary changes if required.

But apart from I, rest all were emotionally involved in Manisha. Aai Dada (parents) were also involved. They prayed for Manisha's recovery.

After about two weeks of struggle to live Manisha came out of that dark dungeon of unconsciousness. She stopped those weird, disturbing and depressing gesticulations.

Dada gave her two teaspoonfuls of mango juice.



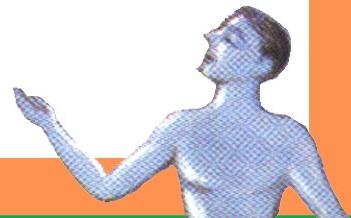
Gradually she recovered. She returned home after a couple of months.

Her father who came to invite me for the home visit rarely came to attend her. Alcohol had chained him. Manisha's uncle who went selling bread from one village to another came regularly.

He paid our bills several months later but completely. Besides he spread genuinely felt appreciation, respect, gratitude for all what we had done. This certainly added to the reputation tremendously.

But most important was the Inner Light within me, which Manisha revealed to me.

I am sure others also must have felt similarly.



Risky

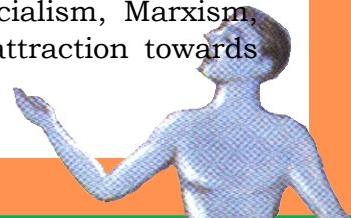
The vehicular pollution is a genuine problem. More cars, more taxis, more two-wheelers cause more pollution. Every day one walks on the roads of Mumbai, or takes a taxi, over commutes by train there are different but obnoxious and disturbing experiences of air and noise pollution. Since the holistic concept of life, health and medicine are not taught, there are no integrated or wholesome or holistic efforts at eradicating or even significantly reducing the pollution. Some kind of patchwork, which is almost completely ineffective, goes on.

But if well-coordinated efforts are made in different related fields then the problem can be overcome.

Thus proper policies in terms of agricultural industries, introduction of productive element in the education, incorporation of holistic concept of life, health and medicine in education are very crucial to curb pollution. Similarly, framing of proper legislation, research on productive processes with minimal pollution and development of health care centers and hospitals based on the concepts of holistic health and holistic medicine are also important. In addition prevention of illegal felling of trees and poaching of animals, development of good roads, reduction in the number of vehicles, promotion of concepts such as smokeless chula i.e. a fireplace, are all important in reducing or preventing pollution.

The details of the solutions however, would vary according to the nature of problems, which vary from place to place.

I developed this outlook towards pollution recently and not in those days. However I always felt that motorcycle per se was a luxury. This was because of getting influenced by ideas of simplicity, democratic socialism, Marxism, ascetic philosophy, escapist movies, attraction towards



martyrdom and such many things.

But even though I thought the motorcycle was a luxury I had enforce that luxury on myself. This was because in those days we had to work in the interior. There were neither roads, nor bus service, to reach the interiors. Bicycles consumed unaffordably high physical energy and time. We had to use motor cycle.

Going to home visits required that we took the patient's relative double seat along with us. The relative would hold the visit bag as well.

That day a known and friendly gentleman by name Dhuri came. He too wore dhoti and shirt but white and not very dirty. He was tall and stout. He had smiling eyes and innocent face. He did not reflect misery and melancholy. He seemed exuberant and enthusiastic.

Again the problem was the same home visit. Further, way to reach the home was through the farms and through very uneven surface. There was no road once a turn was taken from the main road. But as I always maintained and maintain I could not grumble. I could not refuse. I had to accept and fight every possible challenge that was posed by different situations.

One of the redeeming features was that Dhuri was a jovial, good hearted and known person. His company was not sickening!

Dhuri had not sat on a motorcycle even one before. I explained him how he should sit, how he should catch and how he should take care of his dhoti which was likely to get caught in the spokes of wheels.

After he adjusted his dhoti and sat on the motorcycle the motor cycle started wobbling even before I started it. The heavy weight double seat was new to me also.

I started and somehow balanced him and then reached that turn on the main road. Thus far it was all right because it was tar road. Now it was an ordeal. It was that



bumpy surface in the farms!

I was driving on the narrow elevation of mud surrounding a farm. I had to concentrate fully. It was so bumpy that it could have skidded any time. I was actually afraid for many reasons. One was that of skidding and getting injured. Second was that Dhuri would be injured. Third was that I would be laughed at for not knowing proper driving. Fourth was I would get delayed to reach the patient's house. Fifth was that accident could have substantially jeopardized the work of hospital also.

In that state of fear and tension my concentration on the driving was acute. I maintained my eyes exclusively on that narrow strip of hardened mud even as the sun light had started fading.

At last the strip was over.

Now it was a bit better.

Suddenly I realized that I was not speaking to Dhuri and he was also not talking. I asked him why he was not speaking and if he was feeling uncomfortable, or afraid as he was sitting for the first time on motorcycle.

He did not answer.

I asked again, as sometimes the person on the rear seat can not hear the voice of the driver properly. This is especially so if he is not used to.

But there was no reply!

Instantly I developed a sinking feeling. "What happened to Dhuri? Where is he?"

Immediately I stopped the motorcycle and parked it at the side. There was no question of any traffic rule but in villages many people rode bicycles even in dark and if unsuspecting they could bang on motorcycle.

I turned around and started circumspection as to where and how he was! There was nobody!



I was quite worried. It was getting dark and apart from what happened to Dhuri, I was all alone. I could not drive back in the dark as I did not even know the way back to hospital. What could have happened to Dhuri?

Suddenly my instinct was activated. In such situation one becomes shameless and so did I. I needed immediate relief from that tense situation. I needed someone to be there. It was matter of survival now. In that darkness it appeared to me that anything could happen.

“Dhuri! Dhuri! Oh Dhuri!” I called by his name loudly.

But there was no response.

I waited restlessly.

Few minutes later I saw someone coming.

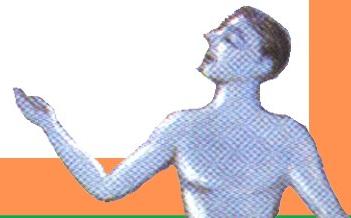
I hoped prayed that he was Dhuri. It was very difficult to make out the identity of the person in the dark.

But as he came closer, his height and stout body figure was useful in identifying the Dhuri.

I gave sigh of relief. Sigh of relief was for several reasons. Apart from the getting out of that frightful situation I was also happy for the fact that he was walking. It meant that he did not have major injury.

As he came close enough he said, “I could not control and fell down, ha ha ha”

Seeing him that way I also broke into laughter.



I want to laugh at it

It was afternoon. It was raining heavily. During the summer afternoons and the rainy ones, people usually do not come out. They take rest at home or when essential go to the farms and work there. So in such afternoons the roads are usually empty. The vehicles such as lorries and buses run but occasionally. Overall traffic comes to almost standstill.

I was one of those few on the road. Being possessed by my obsession I was always on the move. In fact I enjoyed it. Torrential rains and scorching heat both were welcome things for me. I was on my Yezdi motorcycle on my way to Adeli from Vengurla.

I was going slowly as it was very difficult to see things clearly because of pouring rain and moreover during rain it is difficult to keep eyes wide open as the rain batters the face and eyes. Besides the road was slippery.

So while going that in my own mood I noticed some one by

the side of the road. Since there was nobody around presence of a person was quite conspicuous! A person was standing under the shelter of shack near the road. The shack was closed but he had found a space barely adequate to accommodate him under the protruded tiled roof. On going closer I recognized him. He was one of our old patients.

He was shivering.



When asked as to what he was doing there at that odd time and why, he explained, "It was not raining when I started from Vengurla. I had to take home these grains. So I started."

There was no point in asking any further question. It was obvious that he could not afford a vehicle, even a bus. So he had set walking from Vengurla to Adeli and was caught by the rain when he had still half way to go.

For moment I thought if I could take him along with me, as the memory of the Dhuri incidence was fresh. I asked him if he could sit properly and would like to go with me.

Initially he hesitated, "It is all right. I will wait for some time. I think the rain will get over now."

But I knew the rain would not stop. In fact there were signs that it would increase. I understood that he was feeling shy and hence told him that it was not a problem, or trouble for me.

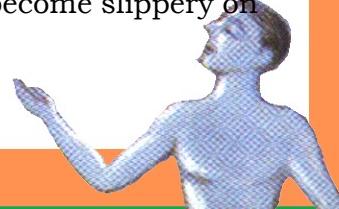
Made him comfortable this way he was very happy and came forward. But when lifted his bag I realized that it was definitely a problem. He lifted the bag with such a difficulty that I could imagine how heavy it was and how difficult it would be to carry it even on motor cycle.

With the thought of carrying that load of over forty-fifty kilos I was shuddered. But there was way out. He sat on the back seat of the motorcycle and held that huge bag on his lap, there was hardly any space for me to sit. Moreover, when he sat, the motorcycle started shaking, trembling like a old tired horse! I hardly could balance the motor cycle.

He seemed to have realized my problem. He immediately asked me if he should get down.

But I thought, "now I should not retreat".

I again tried to look confident and ally his anxiety even as I was tense and started. The road had become slippery on both sides.



After going that way for a while, I saw a snake lying on the road. This was usual. The snakes came out and relaxed on the roads during afternoon time. This is because, when it rains on hot earth the rainwater evaporates and this water vapor fills the holes with wet heat. They found it uncomfortable to stay inside the holes. They therefore loved to come in the open and relax.

There was nothing wrong with this snake also. He was well built and over-nourished on frogs and rats! He was lying majestically across the road, unfazed by what goes around. But the problem was for me.

I had to balance the double seat along with forty-kilo bag of rice.

I could not take the motorcycle on the sides. They were slippery.

I could not stop as the snake was in vicinity.

I could not speed up because it was risky.

I could not ask the snake to go away. It would not oblige.

It was very risky to overrun the snake. Its movement could have led to skidding of the motorcycle. Moreover it could have suddenly turned and bitten any one of us.

Most importantly the man sitting on the back seat did not know anything. He with his huge bag in his laps could not see the road in front!

Within a fraction of a second I had to make a decision. I made it.

I asked the patient to quickly raise his legs, raised mine and straight away overrun the snake.

Next moment we were several meters away. I kept going.

When I told the patient what had happened, he was terrified.

But now the danger had gone.

When I look back at such incidences, I feel their proper



interpretation is important. It is not that I had guts and therefore I could accomplish this adventure. I must admit that many a times I felt afraid even to enter a dark bathroom of an old house or felt afraid to go for answering the call of nature at night time in the open as one has to do many times in villages! So it is not the guts or courage. I felt afraid when alone in darkness.

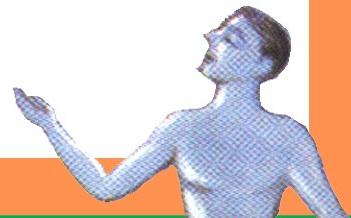
One can at the most say that I could keep my senses intact and make the decision quickly enough and luckily escaped from the danger.

But one can always argue that something else could have been done so as to save the snake and us. Without going into the argument I concede that possibility also.

Because, I feel these things are less important when one concentrates on the aim with which I had gone to Adeli.

Whether I was brave or not, whether my decisions were accurate or not are debatable issues. What is most important is the genuineness of the purpose. People can go through greater dangers, with greater courage and make more accurate decisions also. I would salute them when their purpose is magnanimous and perspective is that of global welfare.

Therefore when the patient was amazed at my guts, I feel like laughing at his misunderstanding and disbelief!



Grievances of the patients

Once I saw a patient on the road in front of the hospital. Being personally known to me I greeted him as usual. But to my surprise and even annoyance he did not reciprocate. Instead he gave angry look and went away.

I could not understand why he behaved that way. Some people may wonder as I paid attention towards such trivial issues. They are justified in thinking that way. These were truly trivial issues. But from my point neither that individual, nor the issues was important. From my point of view every patient's well being and every patient's good opinion about the hospital were important steps towards the goal of social welfare through the rapid and healthy growth of the hospital.

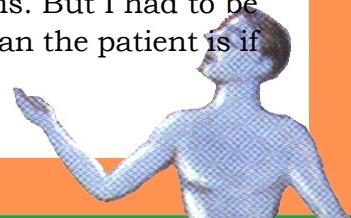
Naturally I started wondering about what went wrong with that person, or what went wrong with us. Actually I had my own dignity, self respect and I never believed in pampering or kneeling in front of patients. But I kept everything aside keeping in view the goal. I wanted to know what triggered such a resentment. That would have helped me to clarify if he had developed any misunderstandings or if was hurt for one reason or another. It was also possible that he was deliberately prejudiced by some people against our hospital.

I sent a man to that person's house and invited him to the hospital.

He came. His face expressed complete dissatisfaction with our work. His eyes exuded with disapproval of our capabilities!

I asked him to sit. He seemed uncomfortable even to sit in my company.

I was also not happy to see his tantrums. But I had to be patient. You have to be more patient than the patient is if



you wish to heal!

I tried to maintain my cool and made general enquiries about his welfare.

He answered coldly and curtly.

It was obvious that he was disgruntled but was not going to open up.

So I asked him point blank if there was some problem that distanced him from us.

He hesitated. He said he was not interested in talking. He said, "You would get angry if I speak against you. You are educated where as we are not. Why create unnecessary bitterness?"

Then I assured him that I would not feel bad even if he was to abuse me. I wanted that he opened up. He seemed to be surprised by my words. It seemed that he not come across a person who was prepared to discuss his faults without bitterness. After that assurance immediately opened up.

He said, "It is true that I do not feel like coming here. The reason is I had faith in you people and hence I came for treatment. But I felt cheated when I was given such an expensive prescription for mere common cold! So I decided not to come and cut off relations with you"

I listened to him carefully.

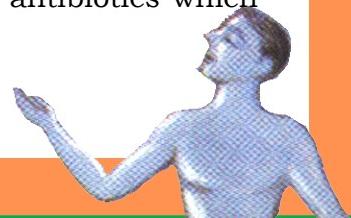
He seemed to be genuinely hurt.

But I also understood what must have gone wrong.

I asked him, "what was the history? What were the symptoms? How were they narrated?"

He recollected for a while and then told his symptoms.

But I told him there was a record of his symptoms and pointed out the symptoms which were recorded indicated that he required to take full course of antibiotics which cost so much"



I reminded him that he also had told that he was ready to spend any amount.

Now he started recollecting and probably understanding my point of view.

I explained to him not only he but many patients tend to unknowingly exaggerate the symptoms. This they do attract the attention of the doctor. They do it to get more care and probably more love, warmth and sympathy. There was nothing wrong with the patients. But the only risk was that overcautious treatment which proved to be expensive.

The patient remembered the whole episode precisely when he was reminded and realized his folly. He remembered how he was also dramatic in presenting his complaints, as he also wanted extra attention, not realizing that it could misguide the doctor.

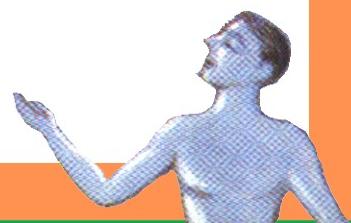
The patient's expression changed completely. He became apologetic.

I stopped him. I told him let us try to improve together. All of us have faults. They can be rectified if we openly and frankly discuss.

He agreed with me.

The cobwebs of suspicion, disapproval, dissatisfaction, prejudice, and anger everything disappeared. He was exuberant and thanked most enthusiastically for having enlightened him.

Thereafter he came regularly and with full faith for every kind of difficulty he came across.



Satisfaction of the patients

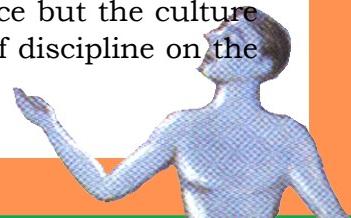
One of the most dreaded things is death. We all have to witness it some time or other. But the doctors are in such a profession that they have always to witness it. The hopes and joy associated with recovery of the patient and the despair and sorrow associated with deaths have to be witnessed by them.

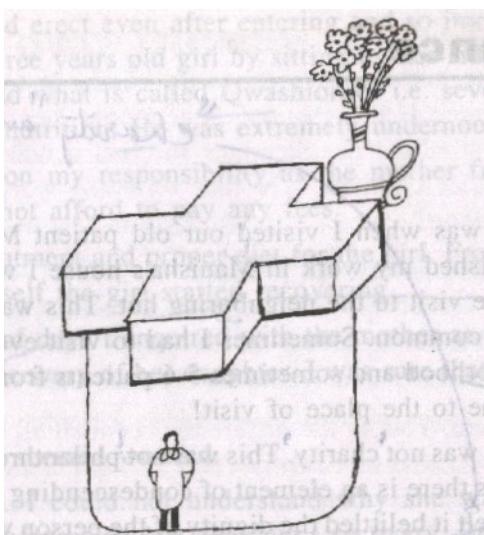
That day some people came to the hospital. There was a very thin and very tall boy with them. They gave all the history correctly and showed the papers.

There was no difficulty in diagnosing. It was advanced case of tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is the same disease that killed the great Madhavrao Peshave who is respected all over Maharashtra. He died at the age 27 or 28. His wife Ramabai in the prime youth opted to enter the funeral pyre along with his body and became immortal as Sati Ramabai. Tuberculosis has these strange associations when seen on the background of history of this land.

We admitted the boy and started treatment. With meticulous treatment over a period of about six weeks the boy who was skin and bones recovered completely. He put on weight and started looking lively and robust. The family members became extremely happy. Since he was from well to do family our fees also were paid completely and immediately and with gratitude.

Such successes are not uncommon in medical practice and hence there was nothing to be boasted upon. But one thing one could feel happy about was the involvement and dedication in the treatment and care given to the patient. This is because he was not brought to our hospital because of difficulty in diagnosis. He had actually been treated haphazardly and hence the tuberculosis had advanced. It was not a failure of science but the culture of irresponsibility, carelessness, lack of discipline on the





part of those who treated him earlier. It highlighted the fact that doctors have their duty towards educating the patients in as much as the patients have to pay the fees of the doctors promptly and unhesitatingly.

This boy went home happily. He met me occasionally in Savantwadi. It was

difficult to even recognize him. He had really started looking a very healthy young adult!

He had joined polytechnic college.

One day I was mentioning this episode to some one.

After discussing further for a while he ascertained the identity of the boy and then he told, "He died in a motor cycle accident".

I was shocked. I felt, " how helpless is a man in front of the nature and fate!"

I remembered that there was another patient of tuberculosis also. In spite of his own pain and discomfort he helped every one around. He was really a very good-hearted soul. I developed a lot of respect and liking for him.

He was discharged after some days when he was recovering.

He expressed his gratitude not only in words but gifted a nice wooden stool to the hospital while being discharged.

Later we came to know that he also died.

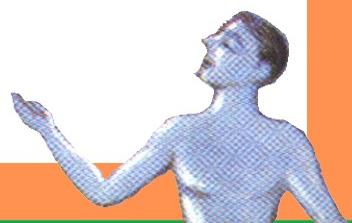
His memory often disturbed me. It seemed to remind that



everything was mortal.

But today when look back it appears that amidst the deaths are living, the immortal vision, perspective, thoughts, emotions and deeds. The people do die bodily but their immortal vision, perspective, thoughts, emotions and deeds continue to live forever.

In anatomy department of G. S. Medical College there is wall painting. It reads, "Genius alone lives, all else is mortal." Traditionally one would say, God alone lives, rest all is mortal. Devotees would say, only God's grace and love for God, are immortal, rest is mortal. Some philosophers may say that soul is immortal and the body is mortal. Atheist may say human excellence is immortal rest all is mortal. The semantics may change but the core of the realization remains the same and victorious!



Defiance

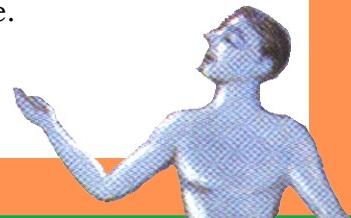
I think it was when I visited our old patient Manisha's house. After I finished my work in Manisha's house I was requested to make a free visit to the neighboring hut. This was not new. This used to be common. Sometimes I had to visit even 5-6 places in the neighborhood and sometimes 5-6 patients from neighborhood would come to the place of visit!

For me this was not 'charity'. This was not 'philanthropy'. I felt that in these words 'charity' and 'philanthropy' there is an element of condescending and patronizing attitude. I felt that it belittled the dignity of the person who receives the help. Secondly in the heart of heart when I thought, I realized that what ever I did, was essentially because it was the first choice in a given situation for me. I felt that neither the situation, nor the development of my brain and therefore not even the perspective, vision, thoughts, emotions and deeds in the direction of global expressed through me belonged to me. Therefore I found no reason and sense nursing condescending and patronizing attitude or pride. In fact when I got rid of these things I became far more comfortable with myself than ever before.

For me whatever I was doing was my chosen work.

So when that call came from Manisha's neighbors, I readily accepted without any hesitation and went to the neighboring hut. It was the example of even worse poverty.

Manisha's shack appeared to be a bungalow in front of that hut. In this hut there was almost nothing. There was no space, no walls, no doors, no windows, no furniture and no vessels. There were no clothes or anything else. There were only few rags, a fireplace and few aluminum pots apparently recovered from garbage.



Some philosophers thought and preached that poor people are Gods. From one point of view it made sense. Manisha's neighbor's hut had a close similarity to the temples. Just as in the temples one has to bend to enter to reach God, in this hut also I had to bend to reach the Gods inside.

I could not stand erect even after entering and so immediately I examined the three years old girl by sitting by her side. She was swollen. She had what is called kwashiorkor i.e. severe protein and calorie malnutrition. He was extremely undernourished.

I admitted her on my responsibility as the mother frankly told that she could not afford to pay any fees.

I started the treatment and proper diet for the girl. From the time of admission itself the girl started recovering.

After a couple of days I enquired with the mother as to how she felt about the recovery of her daughter. I was sure that she would be very happy at that.

But the mother seemed worried.

I was annoyed. I could not understand why she was worried, when she was witnessing her daughter's recovery. But I did not say anything. I thought being illiterate she was shy and could not communicate properly.

But the next day there was even greater surprise for me. The mother had absconded. Now that was irritating as well as alarming. I was really upset. There were a number of questions and no answer. "Who would look after the girl? What could we do the girl, if her mother did not return? Why people behave so irresponsibly? Why did I and why should I invite trouble for myself for such people?"

However my conscience did not allow me to even marginally neglect the girl. I saw that the girl was taken care of thoroughly well. Everything was provided to her.

After a couple of days the missing mother once again appeared.



I asked the nurse to admonish her for creating so much nuisance to us and also find out why she was so careless and irresponsible.

The nurse went in the ward to admonish the lady.

I sat outside doing my work. But I was eager to know what had happened.

But to my surprise, after she came back the nurse's face totally changed.

I asked, "What happened?"

She narrated the story.

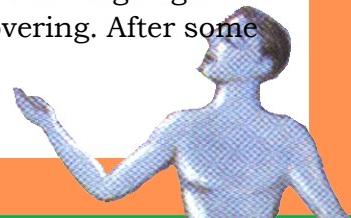
The lady worked as a laborer on the road construction. She was on daily wages. Her husband did not support her and her children. When she admitted her daughter she had actually cooked some food for other children. Her face reflected worry because they were left alone.

She had left the hospital because she had to work to feed her children at home. She went without informing anybody because she was ashamed to reveal all her plight. She had faith that the doctor was saintly and would surely take care of her daughter.

I was stunned. That is the difference between an ordinary person and a seer or a true saint. Only a seer or saint could have imagined or known what was going on! I realized the level of my knowledge and my ignorance. I realized how dwarf I was.

I tried to correct myself by telling the nurse to provide food to the mother also. I asked the nurse to provide the mother with some work and arrange for daily wages also. I realized that I had to respect the dignity of that woman.

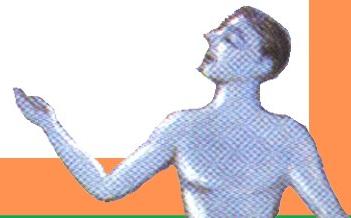
But nothing would work. In spite of all that was offered and given she could not stay. She had other children to look after as well. But the woman had her compulsions, which no one could help. She took the discharge against medical advice even as the girl was recovering. After some



days we learnt that the girl died.

I gave a lecture on the role of poverty in diseases in 1974. I witnessed this case in 1976. I wrote about it in 1984 and now I am writing about it in English in 2001. Twenty-seven years later the TSM has emerged and I have become doubly sure that neither my stress nor that of anyone else in the society can be managed by callously neglecting the girls like this who are dying of under-nutrition.

But more importantly charity and/or efforts to meditate and relax can also not manage the stress, excepting very temporarily. Total Stress Management [TSM] is an ongoing struggle. It involves performing one's sublime duty of participating in social homeostasis, i.e. global welfare, according to one's field.



Bullock and money

One day a woman was brought in bullock cart. The bullock cart stopped in front of the OPD near the cashew nut tree.

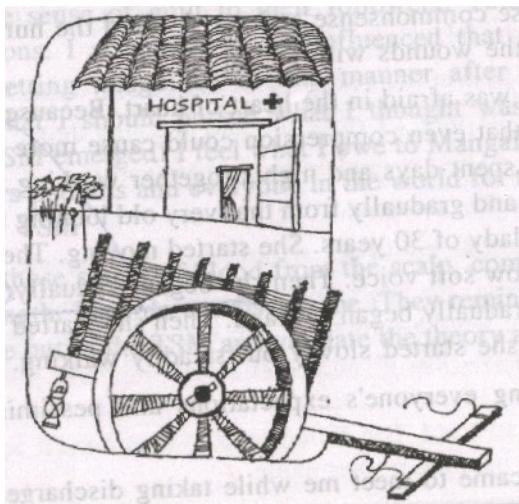
The patient was lady and had to be carried from the bullock cart on to the stretcher. The nurse and attendant found it very difficult to hold that lady as she was very weak.

When I saw the patient I could not believe my eyes.

The lady was so much emaciated that there was hardly any sign of life.

She was unable to talk and even move.

The extremely emaciated and very old looking woman was hardly thirty! Worse was the fact that she had developed bedsores. Bedsores mean ulcers. They develop in weight bearing areas due to carelessness in nursing. Obviously it indicated the quality of care she had received. She was referred by a hospital in the neighboring town. After extracting all the money from her and spoiling her health completely and almost irreparably, she was sent to our



hospital to die. That would mean working thanklessly, getting no fees and getting discredit.

But whether one like or not the character of the society gets reflected in any given field.



But there was no point in dwelling on what others intended. Ignoring all these facts and starting the treatment was the only solution. We began treatment.

But when I look back I appreciate the courage and commitment of my nurses, even more than I did at that time. In that set up where we had always to swim against the stream they all cooperated extremely well. But it became evident far more conspicuously in this case.

This lady was extremely difficult to take care of. She had developed lesions and ulcers almost everywhere. But most importantly her skin had become extremely thin and fragile. It could not give protection to the tissues underlying it. The bleeding could start anytime and anywhere.

But the nurses worked hard and with devotion. I think Hema and Manjarekar were working those days.

One night Hema came running.

I rushed to the ward.

The blood was actually spurting from her scalp.

In this situation also there was none to help, none to guide, none to support.

I had to use commonsense and act. I asked the nurses to simply compress the wounds with cotton.

However I was afraid in the heart of heart. Because the skin was so papery that even compression could cause more bleeding. We must have spent days and nights together working for that lady. Ultimately and gradually from that very old looking near skeleton emerged a lady of 30 years. She started moving. Then she started talking in low soft voice. Then she began to gradually rise and sit. Then she gradually began to stand. Then she started combing her hair. Later she started slowly but steadily walking.

Thus defying everyone's expectations and pessimism the lady recovered.



The father came to meet me while taking discharge.

He said her husband deserted his daughter. As a father, he had sold his land and a bullock. Now he was prepared to sell his remaining bullock and pay our bill.

I told him not to do that.

His eyes filled with tears. He was choked with emotions.

I patted on his back.

Words were redundant.

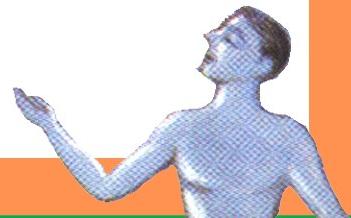
One of those days there was a public meeting. I think it was international year of women. I told my experiences with women and girl patients. I also reiterated that our hospital did what it could.

There was thunderous clapping. While it was going on I remembered my nurses, standing all alone throughout night, compressing the head of that lady.

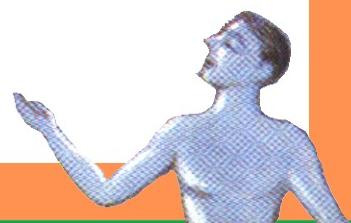
When I remember this incidence, I am reminded of my core. Once I am reminded of that core I feel so happy and content that all money, power, glamour and fame become trivial.

Even those on the pulpits, podiums and stage and their pomp, their mammoth following, their morality, their codes of conduct, their purity and their preaching become a mere shadow that has nothing to do with international welfare in true sense.

It is my experience that most of those who preach from a high platform give sense of guilt to their followers. This way they control millions. I also used to get influenced that way. After repeatedly getting misguided in that manner after repeatedly reaffirming that I should pursue what I thought was right, the concept of TSM emerged! I feel what I owe to Mangala, Manisha and the others patients and everyone in the world for that matter, is being given in TSM.



That makes those spurts of blood from the scalp, come alive and give me strength. They do not disgust me. They remind me of the efforts I have put in the TSM and validate the theory and practice of TSM.



We all love the dogs

The young man limped into the OPD.

There was not much rush.

I asked him to sit down and tell me what had happened.

He sat down and told me that a dog had bitten in the calf region. He wanted to take tetanus toxoid injection and his wound to be dressed properly

In case of dog bite the first question that has been kept in mind is whether the dog was identified or not and whether it was alive or dead.

The person told that while working as wage laborer on the road, the had dog had bitten and was immediately identified and later the dog was dead. This had happened a few days back.

I was immediately alarmed.

I asked the nurse to open the wound then took a look at it. The wound was quite big and treated with some turmeric and some such thing.

It had to be dressed properly but most important thing was anti-rabies injections.

I was sure that he all the chances of getting rabies which is called hydrophobia as the patient of rabies develops tremendous fear and extreme physical repulsion about water.

I explained to him the necessity of taking anti-rabies injections.

But he was firm he wanted TT injection and dressing done.

I tried my level best to explain his acquaintances. I urged the nurse too.



He could not be convinced.

The nurse said he could not afford to go to Vengurla.

I did not agree. He has to be explained the danger. He does not know that he would surely die. He had to be told he should take loan if required but at any cost go ahead with the anti-rabies injections.

The nurse also tried. But failed to convince him. It appeared that head had become impregnable.

After some days I saw him on the road going for work.

He did not even smile.

I volunteered the talk. I wanted to try and convince him.

But he had the expression of distrust and contempt for me.

I thought that he was declaring his triumph through that expression. It appeared as if was telling that he had seen my ulterior motive behind asking him to take injections.

I could not understand why he looked that way or think that way.

He showed on the road itself his wound. "I am perfectly fine," He said emphatically and suggesting that I was unnecessarily advising him to take those injections.

I was deeply hurt.

How could I convince him?

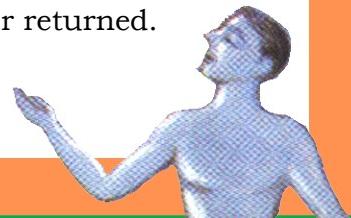
In spite of all efforts he did not budge.

A week later his younger brother came to me.

He narrated the symptoms of his brother.

"It is not possible to admit him here. Please take to government hospital at Savantwadi. They have separate ward."

In spite of economic crunch he had to be shifted to the cottage hospital in Savantwadi. He never returned.



Dada's birthday

I wanted to try my level best to reach and communicate with people and participate in the development of the society in every possible way.

One way of achieving this was to organize a religious function where people from all castes and creeds can participate.

The idea of Satyanarayan had universal appeal.

So the pooja was arranged.

All the surrounding villages were invited. It is interesting to note that being invited for pooja is taken as a privilege and being able to invite someone for the bhajan was also considered as a matter of privilege.

For Satyanarayan Pooja, people from the surrounding villages thronged to the hospital. Notable thing was that they had come completely drenched in the torrential rains. The people defy every kind of obstacle but they have to be convinced about the purpose.

When many of us talk about the peoples' inertia [including I] what is ignored is our own ability to convince the people.

They spent the whole night singing bhajans [devotional songs that are sung in groups].

As a part of my strategy I a drama was organized by the youth organization I was heading. For drama also there was tremendous response.

Dada, my father was to become 72 years. We planned to celebrate it publicly. We declared that we would gift 72 children with vitamins, iron and calcium.

I prepared 100 packets of vitamins, iron and calcium. This was to prevent shortage in case some more children came.



I did not want anyone to go disappointed and I did want anyone to laugh at us also.

Gradually the invitees gathered.

But the total number of needy children was not more than ten to fifteen.

I was thoroughly disappointed.

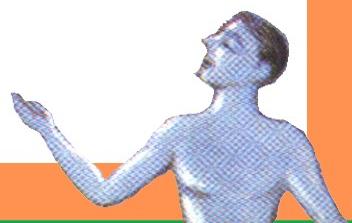
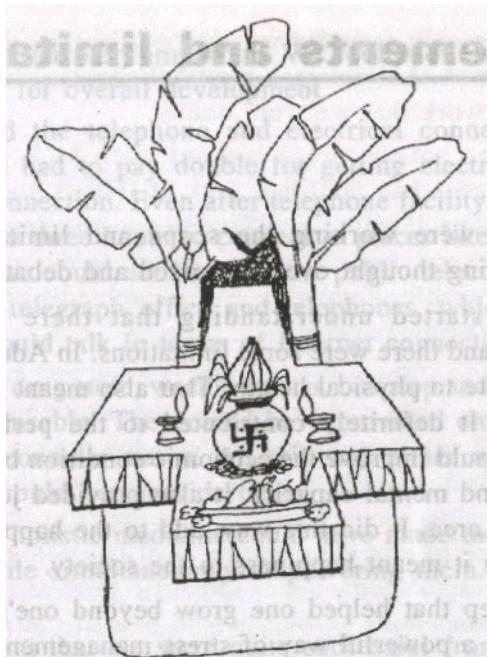
But then I declared that every one present would be gifted a pack.

In spite of distributing liberally the total number of packets distributed reached some thing like 67.

I declared that all the remaining packets would be given free as gifts.

The birthday however became memorable and was widely publicized also. So conventionally speaking it was not at all a failure even though the response was not adequate from my point of view.

My father is no more. I still get his dreams. He passed away at the age of 94. The memories his birthday however have remained. But I am sure that what ever was done at that time has in the course of time has taken the form of TSM. I feel that there is lot more to offer in it and not merely for 72 but to far more people.



Achievements and limitations

Even as we were working the scope and limitations were continually being thought over, discussed and debated.

Gradually I started understanding that there were some achievements and there were some limitations. In Adeli we surely could contribute to physical health. That also meant contribution to happiness. It definitely contributed to the performance in education. It could improve the economic condition by increasing the physical and mental capacity. It also provided for job to many people in that area.

It did this way, add to the happiness of the family. In turn it meant happiness to the society.

This was a step that helped one grow beyond one's petty self. This growth is a powerful way of stress management. We spoke to people, exchanged our views, and wrote in newspapers. All this was useful.

We could not influence the government policies that influenced the health of an individual and the society, in an appropriate and adequate manner. Secondly, we could not help or guide adequately and appropriately the people to influence government policies and their implementation.

Poverty of a patient directly influenced the capacity to buy drugs and even nutritious food. Lack of job caused depression, frustration and other perversions. It could destroy the family happiness. In turn it harmed to society.

Lack of education complemented the superstitions. Our school and college education is deficient in the training of affective, psychomotor and cognitive domain and worst of all it almost completely lacks in productive domain. This has produced the problem of dropouts and child labor.



We could not enforce productive element in the education and environment friendly agricultural industries.

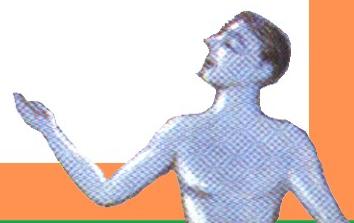
The transport was very important. We could not create roads that were crucial for overall development.

We procured the telephone and electrical connection for the hospital. We had to pay double for getting electric supply and telephone connection. Even after telephone facility was available it took one to three hours to connect to places like Vengurla and Kudal. But we could not improve the public telecommunication, post office, telegraph office and telephones, which were vital. Now one would talk in terms of Internet connection and email.

Ration shop, drug store, weekly bazaar, bus stop and such facilities were indispensable. They could have provided employment and raised the economic status. All this was either on paper or no where! We could not provide these.

Teaching of holistic medicine could have made medicine people friendly, while simultaneously empowering them, but we could not do that.

While this was going in mind, for various other reasons, Anna decided to quit Adeli and pursue plastic surgery in Miraj. I could not have continued the Adeli project in the same form, due to lack of expert help. I would have had to refuse admissions to almost every patient coming from far and wide places. This is was I could not stay back, even when I was ready to exercise some more patience and perseverance and wait for some more time, for perceptible social change to take place. I decided to pursue career in physiology.



After Adeli

After working for three years when I left Adeli, there were several different stressors to be faced. The first was the shock and disappointment in family. Second was disappointment of the people. Third was abandoning all the support system in the form of my family members. Fourth was choosing entirely different field. Fifth was that a of conceptual failure. Because leaving Adeli amounted to accepting the blunder in going there. Sixth was, those, who felt that it was impractical step, were to be proved right. They would laugh at us. The seventh was, those who felt that it was a reformist activity were also to be endorsed.

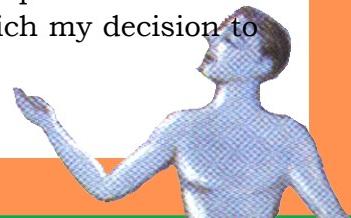
Where ever I was to go I was to be laughed at, as a failure. Besides all these there were likely to be many rumors about us, spread by some individuals with vested interests.

On top of this I had chosen not to take money from the Adeli project. As far I was concerned social welfare was the goal. One could call it society free of exploitation, revolution, social development or anything. I was keen to realize that something which could achieve self-satisfaction and social welfare. Adeli was a means, a milestone. It was not a destination. So there was no question of accepting any money. But I had to face and fight the financial problems.

So when Adeli was left, I had two tasks in front of my mind.

First was to find out, if the basic foundation on which our decision was made was wrong or right. Second was to pursue the same with greater accuracy and wisdom, if I felt that it was right.

I rediscovered the answer to the first question. Amidst all the flak, the very foundation on which my decision to



go to Adeli was rested was correct. I also found out what went wrong. Because of this rediscovery I felt that I had something very precious with me, in the form of my deeds and my experiences.

Around that time I went to see a flat in Malad, a suburb of Mumbai. The builder spoke very well. I was very happy. He appreciated medical profession. He admired me for the work that I had done in the past. At the end he also promised me that from Rs. 200, 000/- he would give me concession of Rs. 1000. In Mumbai I started being treated on the basis of my material prosperity and not my past deeds!

Gradually this started eroding my confidence and self esteem.

My very identity of being a solace to thousands, being a support to thousands, began to come in peril. I had to cast off all my prestige, which I once enjoyed. I had to become one amongst the millions. I had to live like the millions. I had to travel like them through all the travails! This identity crisis was undermining the very existence.

But I accepted the challenge. I felt that God wanted me to go through all those experiences through which a common man goes. This was probably necessary to arrive at realistic solutions to the problems of a common man. Now I had to really prepare myself. I had to study, talk, work so as to pursue my intentions with greater accuracy and wisdom. I began the study of Physiology in the Seth G. S. Medical College and started working to understand the goal of my life more clearly as well.

Sometimes I felt that I was not right in thinking about poverty and misery of others, as I did, as it is a result of my ego. But I could not understand how sympathy, compassion, empathy and concern about the pain and misery of others could be condemned. I could not see how these things could be ridiculed as egoistic. I could not agree that nurturing all the basal instincts and condemning the



above feelings could constitute devotion to God. I could not see how devotion to God could be against these feelings. I could not see how social commitment and total devotion to social welfare could be posed against devotion to God.

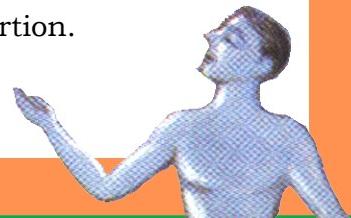
I always tried to see if there were lacunae, in my understanding. Because, I could always see the fact that one could reach the truth through different ways. So I went to various sects and cults. But the dichotomy between God and society persisted.

While going through this I witnessed the strength of shrewdness, cunningness and manipulative ways. This almost completely reduced me in my eyes. This led to undermining of my confidence in myself. I could no more take pleasure in anything that I did. I began to doubt myself.

Most of the godmen who kept talking about God, without concerning about the politics, led to movements, cults and sects, which were peculiar combinations of gullibility and cheating. They also developed an element of hypocrisy. That was because their preaching could entertain only the materially fortunate ones and could do any difference to the actual miseries of the millions. Many sects and cults became exclusive and reserved areas for the richer people.

The atheists on the other hand, could not appreciate matters such as the inner growth, the traditional means useful in that and their contribution to globally beneficial perspectives and policies. They did not realize how empowerment of an individual could help overpower the problems of superstition and helplessness, unite good elements from all strata, overcome the passivity amongst many of the theists and chastise the huge philanthropic, private and government institutions.

The way to manage this stress was to try and spread the wisdom involved in empowering an individual and rectifying the policies i.e. trying at assertion.



Many people felt that the experiences, which I had during my stay in Adeli, were not merely of personal nature. What I learned had objective basis, social relevance and hence could help one in SELF- REALIZATION as well as in contributing to the social welfare.

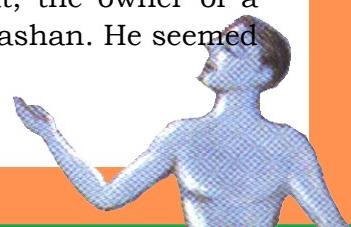
In addition my own innate urge, this fact also probably consciously as well as subconsciously prompted me to analyze the events in an objective manner. To recollect and think about all that had happened was disturbing, because of the involvement of different stressors mentioned earlier.

Sad experiences were sad because they were obviously sad. But pleasant experiences were also sad because they were lost in the past! I plunged myself in those events repeatedly to understand the purport of the whole chain of events clearly. Five years after I left Adeli, this became somewhat possible. I began to write what I understood to share it with the people.

The first effort in this direction was SURYASHODH [This means search of the sun (truth)]. I wrote this novel before BHOVARA. Its original title was ANTARI ZEPAVATANA [This means, while peeping inside the soul]. The Popular Publishing House returned it. I felt somewhat disappointed. But did not feel let down. This was because of the punctuality of Mr. Ramadas Bhatkal, the proprietor. He reached the manuscript within stipulated time to my residence. After this, the novel was sent to two other publishing houses for publication. One took six to seven months and the other almost two years to return it. At this I felt not disappointed but let down and hurt by the lack of frankness, lethargy and utter disregard for the writer's feelings and efforts.

But in no way I was frustrated. I was clear about my purpose.

Around this time I met Mr. V.V. Bhat, the owner of a publishing house named Abhinav Prakashan. He seemed



to understand my intentions. At around this time, he and some others made a practical suggestion that I should write my experiences as they were and not in the form a novel as I had done in case of SURYASHODH. The idea of BHOVARA was thus born and I began to write. I started showing Mr. Bhat the written material from time to time and he also gave suggestions.

At this time, working as a lecturer in medical college, I was doubly suffocated. Firstly, by a variety of personal problems [which any working employee usually goes through] and secondly by the social maladies. Added to this suffocation was the difficulty in establishing dialogue with the people. The SURYASHODH [book as well as the actual realization of truth!] was not at all in the sight. On the contrary, day by day I was sinking into the writing of the book BHOVARA, which meant whirlpool and in the dark whirlpool of the trying circumstances too! Every time when Mr. Bhat made his suggestions, I would feel disturbed. For me, they came in the way of the dialogue I needed to establish so desperately. Many a times I felt like giving up.

But Mr. Bhat continued to give me support and encouragement while persisting on his suggestions. He kept on convincing me that the writing had to be simple and smooth. He kept on telling that the reader should not be burdened by complicated and clumsy writing.

As a result I wrote and rewrote several times. Mr. Fakira Gaikawad must have established a record of preparing manuscripts of the same book so many times! Every time he gave me the corrected and clean manuscript, I modified it to such an extent that it used to be difficult to decipher even for myself. He literally struggled at making out every sentence from the mess I made and wrote it all over again.

On several occasions I felt, “ Why should I dig the past, which had gone by? Would it not hurt the concerned individuals? Why should I hurt them? Why should

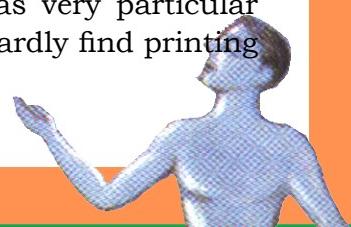


I broadcast my failure? Would not it be interpreted as encashing of failure? Won't the readers ridicule the defeat as the result of my foolishness? Won't the family members get irritated and the readers laugh at my "leaking" the family 'secrets'? All these questions had made me touchy and fickle. I was indeed restless, anxious, nervous and extremely worried about the outcome of these efforts. I was afraid also because even as I was keen to share my experiences, I was not in a position to drink the poison of enmity, bitterness and hatred.

But many individuals and especially Mr. Fakira Gaikawad and Mr. V. V. Bhat kept on boosting my morale. Ultimately the final manuscript was handed over to Mr. V. V. Bhat. By this time I was so much fed up with the writing and editing that I asked Mr. Bhat to do any amount of modifications, which ever he deemed necessary. I also told him that he could delete anything, he felt clumsy.

The book went for printing. Now the problem of money arose. I was left with only the burning desire to share my experiences. But it was also rapidly extinguishing. Even my determination was getting crippled. I borrowed money from Dr. M. J. Dhakan, Dr. Yashavant Deshmukh and Dr. Shirirsh Nadedkar and also other friends whose names I am unable to recollect. I shall always remain grateful to them for their appreciation of my work. Later, I repaid this loan by borrowing from municipal bank.

The difficulties were not over. In spite of prompt payment, the printing was getting delayed beyond imagination. My patience was being stretched to the breaking point. Who was at fault? I could not point to any one. Everyone had reasons. It seemed that my luck, the luck of the book and probably the luck of those for whom my heart was bleeding and boiling, all were bad. After about one and a half years the galley proofs started coming out. Mr. Bhat and I did the proof reading. He explained to me the technique of proof reading. He was very particular about accuracy and hence one could hardly find printing



mistakes in the first edition of BHOVARA. His efforts were really commendable.

After grueling interlude of several months, one day I saw the copy of BHOVARA printed elegantly. I became very happy but also quite apprehensive. I was worried about another problem. I knew that now, I would have to face responses, which could be either be rewarding or disturbing. The consequences could be consoling or hurting! But I could complain to none, as it was my choice!

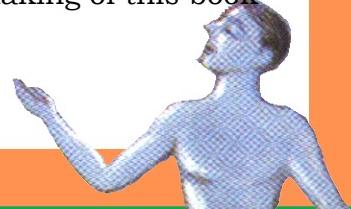
The events and thoughts depicted in the book could have some deficiencies. It could be possible that some events and facts, which were actually important, had not been described. This could have happened because they did not come to the surface of my mind. The book was however, never intended to blame anybody personally for what had happened.

The idea was of sharing. It was to assert the feeling underlying the Adeli project. Sharing the experiences could help in generating bonds amongst like-minded individuals. Such sharing was deemed vital for the development of movements and projects for the welfare of the mankind.

The actual preparation of the manuscript was entirely done by Mr. Fakira Gaikawad. Right from the preparation of the manuscript to encouraging me from time to time, he helped me in several ways.

My wife Dr.Vibha and daughters Urjita and Mukta had to go through every kind of inconvenience and suffering, when I was engrossed in this writing. Their role in bringing out this book therefore was indirect but indescribably important.

The interactions with my friends, well-wishers, colleagues, relatives and patients about experiences in Adeli were crucial to the germination of the idea of writing and its actualization. Hence their role in the making of this book was also very important.



Mr. V.V. Bhat, Mr. Manohar Pradhan and Mr. Bal Thakur were responsible for the accuracy, good printing and good cover design respectively.

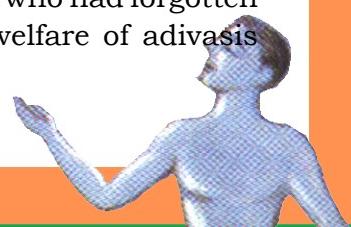
As per Mr. Bhat's suggestion, I gave Dr. Mrs. Indumati Parikh a noted medical practitioner and a social worker, a copy of BHOVARA, which was still without cover. I gave one copy to late Mr. Bhai Savant who was health minister of the state of Maharashtra at that time. Dr. Mrs. Parikh gave her foreword, but I could not get one from Bhai Savant. He was probably too busy.

It is always important that one gets timely adulation so as to keep going. Dr. Mrs. Indumati Parikh wrote an appropriate foreword to the book, with very great appreciation for the work. I feel that her words of appreciation demonstrated how one could do stress management of a young struggling mind. Hence I am quoting them here.

Dr. Mrs. Indumati Parikh wrote,

"This book is based on Dr. Shriniwas j. Kashalikar's own experiences, which he went through during his medical career and while running a hospital in Adeli. This village Adeli is in Sindhudurg district of the state of Maharashtra. He says on page 24, "I felt that if I set my own example as a socially committed doctor, before people, then it may help them." This one sentence makes it clear why the doctor set out to start a hospital in an obscure and remote place like Adeli and decided to dedicate himself in its development.

This decision of the doctor was not sudden or thoughtless. It was not taken on the spur of the moment also. Ever since his student days the doctor was seized by social concern. As a result, one notices some sterling qualities in his personality, which he seems to have groomed consciously. These were, loyalty to his own conscience, anger towards injustice and readiness to throw himself in the chosen mission. Naturally his friend who had forgotten himself while getting involved in the welfare of adivasis



[aborigines] had become his own idol too. But he was not merely sentimental. He had keen interest in science too. So, he was attracted towards his professor also, who was involved in scientific research.

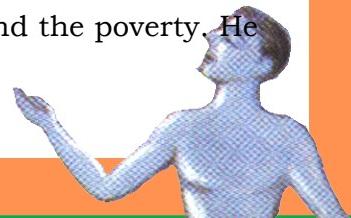
This dual attraction Science and social transformation created a stormy conflict in his sensitive mind. It was difficult to resolve it.

But ultimately the youthful emotions had upper hand. He got attracted and plunged in the pursuit of exploitation-free society, at the tender age of 18 years. At this time he was just in the second year of M. B. B. S. [Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery] course. He states in this regard, “Running after lucrative career and even matrimonial pleasure appeared trivial. Only two feelings dominated. One was the anger towards exploitation and the other was passionate desire to work for eradicating it and creating society free of exploitation” [Page 10].

Today on the background of the experiences of the doctor, one finds that the number of youngsters with such feelings is on the rise. This gives hope about the future. But the fact that, at present there is no leadership, which can provide accurate and conscientious foundation to these feelings, is painful.

It was at this juncture when he was getting increasingly attracted towards the dream of society free of exploitation, that his elder brother proposed the idea of setting a hospital in Adeli. The doctor at once plunged himself in the mission.

His excellent descriptions of the difficulties he came across right from the beginning are revealing and disturbing. One realizes after reading these descriptions, how it is impossible for a rural man to get essential commodities and equipment, which are commonplace in urban setting. Nature also presented a variety of problems. The doctor had to confront even poisonous snakes. But even more menacing was the terrible ignorance and the poverty. He



met a helpless poor mother unable to procure medical care for her daughter even as the lesion in her head was getting deteriorated to the extent of developing maggots. He came across another helpless mother who left her five-year old sick daughter in the hospital and went away. It has to be noted that this was not because she was callous. It was only because she knew that the doctor was kind and trustworthy and would not mind once the situation was explained to him. The fact was, unless and until she went to work she could not only not buy the medicines for this daughter, but also could not earn the living for her other children at home. He met also a man who did not admit his poisoned brother to the hospital because it was a new moon day. The new moon day is traditionally considered inauspicious. He was worried that something disastrous would happen if the boy were shifted out of the home on that day. In such situation he could have agreed to shift the boy only if the priest [who is consulted on such occasions] had given the green signal. But he had not been able to consult the priest. He met another person. This person's son, who was admitted in terminal stage, unfortunately died. The doctor informed him with so with heavy heart. But after being informed, he was impatient to know, whether his vasectomy operation [operation carried out in a man for preventing childbirth] could be reversed! This was even before the funeral of the son!

However there were encouraging experiences also. He met people like Hema Naik, Mungekar and Mestry, who worked with involvement and dedication.

While working honestly in that village he had all the experiences which a doctor gets in urban medical practice. He came across government health officers, who usually did not mind performing family planning operations even on railway platform, denied recognition for the hospital as a family planning center. Such recognition could assure the patients some amount of money as a compensation for family planning operation. They gave the lame justification



that the hospital did not have air-conditioned operation theater.

Many celebrities and acclaimed social workers visited the hospital. They showered lip sympathy. But they did not even respond to letters. He also had experience of the political leaders and other big wigs. They professed service to the down trodden but hardly ever extended any cooperation. They extracted full advantage from the hospital.

At every stage of development and experiences the doctor realized that the situation was not as easy as one could think. This increasing comprehension of the reality is evident in his own statement, "Gradually we developed a feel for the objective reality and realized, how tough was the challenge facing us" [Page 24]. But still, the doctor continued working whole-heartedly. He kept consoling and reassuring and imparting health at minimum cost, to the ailing patients.

While going through this moving account of experiences, one gets absorbed in the descriptions of the first two patients. They are so moving that they become a matter of self-searching and self-revelation for any doctor. While carrying on the medical work the doctor took active part in social medical care and education. Through writing articles in local press, public speeches, guest lectures, organizing youth for different constructive activities, he kept on trying to advance the cause of social upliftment.

But around this time he began to feel the strain. This was not because of the difficulties mentioned above but because he was unable to get adequate response from the people for whom he was working. He began to feel sad also because he was failing to demonstrate 'results' and the 'wisdom' in such activity. He knew that in such situation how his prosperous urban colleagues, would resent such work as impractical and or foolish. But most importantly he was disturbed when his friends whom he considered his comrades resented his work as 'reformist'.

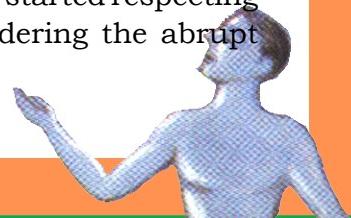


and 'liberal'. These words at that time had derogatory connotation amongst leftist circles. This was all within the short span of three years. The doctor started realizing that exploitation would not end unless and until the exploited man was empowered and enlightened. He started realizing that for this, the shackles of customs and values holding him down had to be broken. But he still had not developed a clear picture. He was not sure about the exact way. Many times he felt that the immediate activity could be that of education to raise the general consciousness of the masses. He thought this could pave a way for the social transformation. But he also thought that this was not probably adequate and accurate enough.

While he was in such a state of mind, his colleagues also started losing interest for one reason or the other and one by one began to leave in favor of better options. In spite of this the hospital was running well. But the overall social development and the response of the people were not commensurate with the efforts put in. Or at least it appeared so, to many of those working there. This fact added with the drudgery of administrative work, lack of job satisfaction as a plastic surgeon and may be some other factors, began suffocating his brother. He began to think of quitting the hospital. This was a major blow. This was because his brother's presence was crucial for the hospital. He was the foundation, on which the edifice of the entire project was built.

The doctor says with respect to the final outcome, "We lost because of the people's ignorance, superstitions and the grip of exploitation machine which crippled them, on the one hand and our deficiencies as individuals on the other. This however does not mean that idealism and humanism behind our endeavor failed" [page 163].

I however think that this has not been a defeat. The doctors' work was expanding and growing. Increasing number of people in the surrounding areas too, had started respecting and liking the doctors. However considering the abrupt



outcome, it appears that some more forbearance and tenacity were required. But in the absence of like-minded comrades who are equally or at least partially committed to the cause, this becomes difficult. It appears that the brothers lacked this like-mindedness.

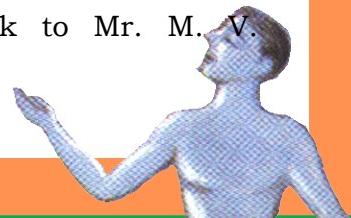
Looking at it from this point of view I think that the doctors' experiment had neither an unexpected nor too bad an outcome. I would have felt so if the doctor had been uprooted or frustrated. But this was not so. Neither did he sink nor did he nurse any life long bitterness. On the contrary he says, "Now when I look back, I feel happy in the heart of heart by our honesty and nobility. We were not driven to confront the miserable social conditions by petty goals. In fact, I feel buoyant with the understanding that our next project should come with deeper thought, more wisdom and greater patience." [Page 164]. This indicates that the doctor retains the grit and determination to attack the evils with more careful thinking and insight. He knows that protracted and incessant struggle on all fronts is required. Because, only that can help the society shackled in poverty, ignorance and stifling customs get freed and rise. I am sure this truth would penetrate the hearts of the youngsters, to the depths.

This narrative has much literary merit. The events, the places and the persons involve you, accommodate you and talk to you respectively. The doctor has candidly revealed his deficiencies without any hypocrisy.

This book would certainly serve as guide to the young doctors who may choose to go to villages. But more importantly, it would brilliantly reveal the truth that the task of social transformation neither gets defeated nor gets over. In fact, such task, undertaken with increasing clarity of thoughts and emotions, goes on and on and grows as well, even in the absence of immediate results."

Suddenly the downpours of happiness began!

Dr. Anand Saudagar gave the book to Mr. M. V.



Rajadhyaksha, a renowned critic and other Marathi litterateur Mr. Madhu Mangesh Karnik.

They admired the book beyond expectations!

I decided to go ahead with publication without Mr. Bhai savant's foreword. Mr. Bhat suggested that the publication ceremony be in Dr. Jeevraj Mehta Lecture Theatre famous by the abbreviation M.L.T. of K.E.M. Hospital. I got permission for the same. It was a matter of great happiness and honor.

Mr. Bhat and many friends of mine helped me in making the publication ceremony a memorable one.

The publication was planned on March 22, 1986.

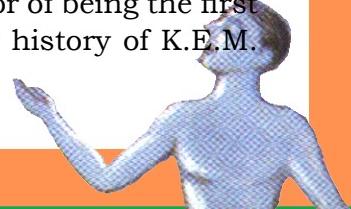
It was very heartwarming that Dr. Mrs. Kendurkar and other departmental colleagues sponsored the snacks and tea for all the guests at the ceremony. I would remain grateful for this generous gesture of appreciation forever.

Dean Dr. Parulkar presided over the publication ceremony and admired me. Mr. Neelkanth Khadilkar and Mr. Karnik were guest speakers and admired the book tremndously. Mr. Khadilkar elaborated on the limitations of such awork as we had done in Adeli and pointed out that struggle for justice to 99 percent was important.

It was really heartening that people all walks of life were and different ideologies were present for the ceremony. Some of them were, Comrade Jambhekar, D. P. Khandekar, Dr. Sudhakar Deshpande, Dr. Jalukar, Dr. Mrs. Nagral, Dr. Kamalakr Kulkarni, Mr. Sudhakar Kulkarni, Profesor Manik Shahani, Dr. C.V. Patel, Mukul Pandya and Suresh Nagarsekar.

It was as if, while drowning in the whirlpool, I suddenly started flying!

Renowned litterateurs, top-notch critics and almost everyone were praising me. Besides I was selected for fellowship to U.S.A.. I had the rare honor of being the first to be selected for the fellowship in the history of K.E.M.



Hospital and one of the only about ten in the world.

It was the time of snacks. When the guests started thronging for autographs I was so happy that I was almost out of my mind! I shook hands with Mrs. Nagral instead of greeting her with NAMASKAR, which I would have normally done. She probably understood state of my mind and did not resent.

Now I had to concentrate on the publicity of the book, as Mr. Bhat was could exert physically due to advancing age. I had to personally go from place to place and meet people. I had to make sure that newspapers publish reviews on the book so that people come to know about the book. I worked relentlessly and accomplished the job.

The Marathi daily Navakal described the book as the best book in Marathi in that year. All the other papers also praised the book. Dr. Subhash Bhende wrote a beautiful review on the book for the daily Lokasatta but it was not published as already it had published another review on the book written by Mrs. Madhuvanti Sapre. Dr. Bhende's efforts though wasted created permanent place for him in my heart. The famous critic and litterateur Mr. P. S. Nerurkar compared me with A. J. Cronin and Somerset Maughm. The world famous writer and dramatist P. L. Deshpande wrote a letter of appreciation, which was printed by Mr. Bhat in his periodical SANGRAHALAYA. Another famous Marathi writer Mr. Jayvant Dalvi expressed his appreciation by sending me cheque for price of the book! This was a unique reward!

Around this time the whirlpool of situation that almost drowned us at Adeli was once again ready to suck and drag me to the bottom.

It all started with minor disappointments. Some journalists took the book but did not or may be, could not write reviews. But this was followed by an editorial. There was an editorial on BHOVARA in the noted Marathi daily, Navashakti. Since publication of an editorial on



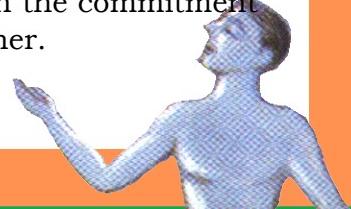
one's book in a unique honor, I should have been happy about it! But, though there was a lot of praise for the book, there was also a comment of suspicion about my motive in "publicizing my failure".

I felt it necessary to explain my feelings and commitment underlying the writing of BHOVARA and its publication. So after consulting my friends I sent an explanation to the daily and it was also published without any cuts. It clearly stated how my motive was only to share my experiences. The sharing of the experiences helps in generating bonds amongst like-minded individuals. This is vital for the development of movements and projects for the welfare of the mankind. More over, it was important that the younger generation knew the reality and thereby could make proper decisions. It also stated that due to this clear purpose I had gone to extent of borrowing money from my friends for the publication of the book.

While writing this explanation, I could not even imagine that it could hurt my publisher. But it did! He was a simple and selfless man. He was selflessly and dedicatedly involved in various movements aimed at social upliftment. He had a track record of publishing good books. His dealings with the writers were clean and honest. One and all respected him. I was perplexed as to what hurt him.

I told him that, I really appreciated and expressed my appreciation in every form and wherever I could. I insisted that I was really grateful for all the pains he took for the book. But he and his wife also were apparently really hurt, though I never intended to hurt them. I really felt sad, but could not express my feelings in appropriate words and manner. I could not persuade him to continue his involvement. He refused to sell the books and returned all of them to me.

It is only later that I learnt that it was below the dignity for a publisher to accept money from the writer, for publication of a book. Probably it reflected badly on the commitment and even financial status of the publisher.



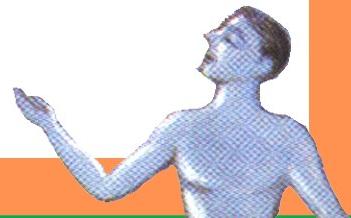
Unfortunately Mr. Bhat is no more. I wish to record here that I never had, do not have even the slightest possible ill feeling about him. I shall always remember the warm, patient and encouraging treatment he gave me and the efforts he took in the making of and publication of BHOVARA.

However as result of this all the copies of BHOVARA got locked up in a cupboard in my house. BHOVARA, means whirlpool. But it also included expression of my conscience itself. Thus my conscience was imprisoned in my house in Mumbai!

Even as the reviews of the book were excellent and there was tremendous demand for the book, it did not reach the people. With the entire loan on my head, I felt as if I was being punished by BHOVARA the evil whirlpool of bad time. The whirlpool responsible for social as well as personal maladies, punished me because I was trying to expose it with its appropriate identity to the people! It was as if the whirlpool that almost drowned us in Adeli was once again drowning its depiction BHOVARA and me, together! It appeared to assume the form of black hole, far more powerful than the whirlpool!

I did nothing as I was rendered a helpless witness! There was no time too. The date of departure to USA was approaching very fast. But struggle never ends. New companions join and the struggle continues even though the forms change.

Dr. Nandoskar, Jagadish Kabre, Dr. Jha, Dr. Kamalakr Kulkarni, Dr. Dilip Deshpande, Dr. Gadkari, Vishvanath Poyekar, Com. Sane and many others bought five, ten, twenty or whatever number of copies they could. Com. Jambhekar bought some forty copies and paid the amount immediately. Dr. Surendra Barlinge and the members of the SAHITYA SANSKRITI MANDAL were fair enough to honor me with a grant award. My brother at Miraj also bought some copies.



All this helped me not only regain confidence but also recover to some extent, financially. I gave on credit hundred copies to Mr. Arwind Patkar too, with the hope that they could be sold on his stall. I took along with me fifteen to twenty copies even to USA and distributed them amongst Marathi speaking people there. There were a lot of letters of admiration boosting my confidence in the struggle that continued. Though later on all the admiration evaporated. I wrote from USA and asked my wife to send copies of BHOVARA to producers of dramas and movies. The purpose was clear. If BHOVARA deserved, one could produce a movie or drama on it and reach the appropriate depiction of the whirlpool that led to social and personal maladies, to a larger section of society.

But not a single individual replied. BHOVARA, the expression of my conscience appeared to be boycotted by everybody! Not as an as an exception to this but just due to coincidence, the noted actor director late Mr. Gajajan Jagirdar once praised it, on phone but without any active cooperation!

Even as I was unable to convey the depiction of the whirlpool and fight against it successfully, I finished my fellowship successfully. By the end of one year I returned from USA with two awards and a lot of experience.

When I reached home, I found those five hundred copies in my cupboard. In the form of their presence, the actual whirlpool that I had been trying to depict, was eagerly waiting to ridicule me. It appeared as if it were humiliating me for my pride for having received acclaim! It appeared to tell me that no matter how much I tried and even seemed to succeed, It would defeat me. It seemed to tell me that the copies were there to stay and I would be crushed for every attempt I would make to defeat the whirlpool. I appeared to suggest that the copies would remain intact and new as reminder of failure. It would not give me the satisfaction of even forgetting the copies of BHOVARA. It was telling me that failure would always be reminded



to me and even white ants would not touch what I had written! Every time I saw them I felt unbearable agony probably similar to that of a parent on looking at his or her handicapped child.

Once someone introduced me to his friend as an author. I instantly corrected, "I sell the books also". I felt dejected by the fact that the advertisements of cinema, tobacco, alcohol and vulgarity of every kind were welcome. But I who tried to express my conscience was being suppressed and suffocated. A doctor or a writer could not advertise his or her work! I felt, if situation demanded it, why not sell books? But the very fact that a writer has to sell his book degrades him and his book in the eyes of others. They do not buy them! If at all they buy, they do so very reluctantly. Moreover they hesitate and delay the payment or do not pay at all! This experience was really unforgettable. I felt miserable.

Later I decided to distribute the books to my students in the medical college and every body whom I came across. I decided to leave them with the options of reading, not reading and even throwing it in a dustbin.

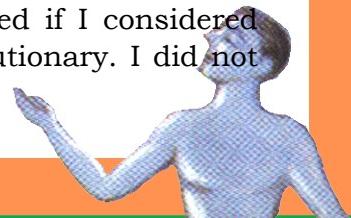
Meanwhile I met Ms Tatanya from Russia and Mr. Gunther Southheimer from Germany. Both of them knew Marathi very well and took my book with great interest. But later there was no communication whatsoever.

One never knows if it was because of a postal problem.

Later I came to know the sad demise of Mr. Gunther Southheimer from newspaper.

But struggle continued. I was determined to go ahead with my efforts and the situation was determined to defeat me.

One can always raise a question here. Is it always necessary that a writer has to struggle so much for selling his or her book? In fact does not such frantic effort indicate self-centeredness? Some one actually asked if I considered myself a great reformer, a great revolutionary. I did not



and I do not. But I do not condemn myself too.

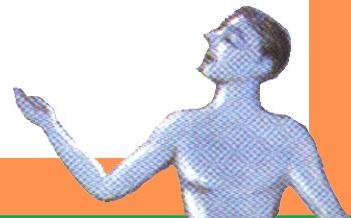
Once a senior communist leader Meenakshi Sane asked me in her letter, "Why are you so unsatisfied when the book has earned so much acclaim?" I wrote to her that even as acclaim is a matter of pleasure, BHOVARA was primarily aimed at empowering and UNITING PEOPLE TO COME OUT SAFELY FROM THE WHIRLPOOL that sinks the individual and the society. This same inspiration was behind, Adeli project, behind writing of BHOVARA and the efforts taken in reaching BHOVARA to the people.

While the first edition was being exhausted Dr. Jayashree Gadkari, Com. Jatindra Karhadkar and myself had finished the translation of Bhovara. But remained shelved for more than 12 years. It could not get publisher. Most importantly, when I read it again last month, I myself was totally dissatisfied with it tore it in front of my friend Dr. Hoskeri, to his surprise!

Those days, i.e. when the first edition of Bhovara was over, I had been fairly absorbed in physiology. But two gentlemen from Chintamani Sahitya Sahayog publication house approached me. They were Mr. Bhagvat and Mr. Upadhye. They offered to publish the book.

After a couple of years the second edition came out.

Strangely though, its fate was not much different from that of the first edition. Interestingly even Suryashodha, which had very good response initially, had similar fate due to various reasons.



After Bhowara

At this juncture what I feel is that, though I had tried to give all facts in Bhowara and Suryashodh, they were with my reflections, they seemed to revolve around an institution and a person or persons. They reflected a response of an individual battered from all sides and in many ways while trying to live to the best of his conscience. There is some degree of hurt feeling reflected in these books. It was natural at that time. There is an effort to justify the aim underlying the project too. That was also understandable. There was honesty as well as subjectivity commensurate with my development.

Bhowara, is actually a description of the stressors, which were invited by us due to our ideals! The fate of BHOVARA and SURYASHODHA was another invited stress. But as the aim was clear, I kept working and studying to get the solution to the individual and social problems even as I had to go through financial stresses and strains which every salaried person has to undergo.

I kept thinking and studying what would be the solution to the stark reality around. For seeing the children begging on the railway platform, picking rags and such things upset me. I could not rest in peace. That disturbs even today. That is exactly what stimulated me write.

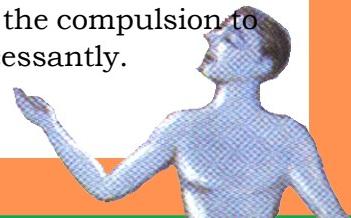
I kept on writing on any and every issue I came across.

Around this time realized the need to empower the youngsters with magnanimity.

So I wrote a book in positive health entitled THAKAWA GHALAWA- SPHURTI MILWA.

After staying in USA for one year I wrote a book that could give a realistic picture of American life.

But this desire to grow from within and the compulsion to improve the society went on and on incessantly.



When I studied Vishnusahasranama and Geeta I was encouraged by endorsement of what I felt and what I was trying to do.

I wrote on both of these.

I then wrote a book on sexology in which I highlighted the human aspects of sex and not merely the sex organs.

When I studied NAMASMARANA and practiced it, I thought it was a wonderful and simplest way to individual and social emancipation. I wrote four books on NAMASMARANA.

By this time I met Pushkar. He was one of those very few individuals who thought I was not a fool. He invested money and brought out the first book on NAMASMARANA.

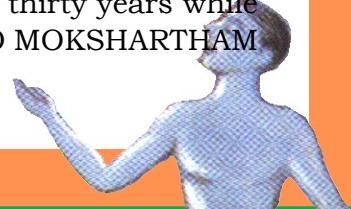
When he began to share my mission it was a tremendous boost.

It was very difficult to arrange the sale of these books. Pushkar took lot of efforts.

Then was evolved the concept of holistic medicine, holistic health and so on.

But all these books while were sold out and read, did not seem to make any difference to the society. This was frustrating. Neither did I get significant personal success nor did the society seem to improve. I was being proved foolish on both accounts. All that I was doing was borrow the stress of others and fight it. In the course of time it became unbearable. The physical and psychological ill effects of all these stressors made me miserable.

One day suddenly it became clear that all what I have been doing is trying to nourish the soul within. It was essential for everyone to know that this way one can help himself and the society better. In absence of this the soul remains hungry and thirsty and charm of life perishes. I found that people with tremendous money, fame, name reputation and everything were hungry and thirsty inside. So the struggle I went through for over thirty years while trying to practice the concept "ATMANO MOKSHARTHAM".



JAGADHITAYA CHA”, meaning living for the true self and hence for the entire universe was nothing else but TOTAL STRESS MANAGEMENT.

I started conducting workshops and counseling. The results were subjective as well as objective. All that was envisaged seems to be in offing. It seems the crores of children would see better days as more and more people appreciate TOTAL STRESS MANAGEMENT! The Sun seems to have begun to smile and would keep smiling!

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